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N64 MAGAZINE
FOR NINTENDO 64 FANS
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JULY 1997
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So can you tell me now, what's the name of the game?

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8. **N64 Magazine will not pad itself out with tedious waffle when it could be writing interesting stuff or showing great pictures!**
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10. **N64 Magazine will be everything a Nintendo 64 fan could possibly want, every month!**



ABBA are big Nintendo fans, you know.



WELCOME TO 

Having never been much good at anything (apart from making spaghetti bolognese) (and keeping gerbils), I was delighted to find I'm the best at *Mario Kart 64*. James and Tim aren't bad, but not as good as me, and Wil's hopeless. Even Zy hasn't worked out how to jump over the wall on Mario Raceway yet. I'm having a great time.

Not too many reviews this month, you'll notice. The reason? Hardly any new N64 games have been released recently. (Even so, we'll get at least ten letters saying: "You should have more reviews." You'd be amazed.) Fear not, however. The next few weeks will see several eagerly awaited games appearing in Japan and America – *Go Go!! Troublemakers*, *Multi-Racing Championship*, *Hexen* and *Dark Rift*, all of which we'll review next month – and all will filter through to Europe in due course. And, on top of that, America's forthcoming E3 exhibition should see the unveiling of loads more exciting new titles – more on that next month too.

A plant's been sitting outside my flat ever since I moved in a couple of years ago – just a stick in a pot with a couple of tattered leaves on it. I've watered it all the same, though. And suddenly, this week, all these huge white flowers appeared all over it. It would be nice to imagine it's some sort of good omen, but this seems unlikely.

There's a new face to say 'hello' to this month. It belongs to Paul Jarrold, who'll be helping Wil to design **N64**'s pages and who'll therefore lurk mysteriously in the background as far as you, the readers, are concerned. He's a big fan of Nintendo games, though (we made sure of that), and particularly nifty at *Mario Kart*. Not as good as me, though.

Jonathan Davies
Editor



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PLANET 64

News from the world of Nintendo 64



N64 MAGAZINE HOW TO...

Guides to ease you through life.

TEAM 64

Inspired by our Japanese arcades guide on page 66, we've crammed ourselves into a *Print Club* booth...

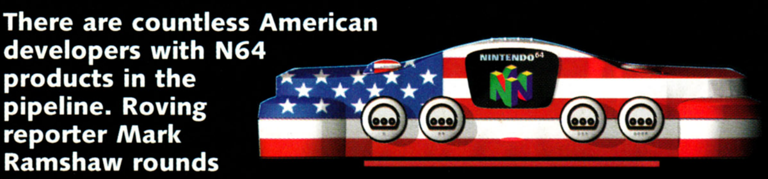
James Ashton
Look very closely, readers. Notice something unusual? That's right: James is smiling. Yep, it's not often you'll catch a glimpse of his teeth, except when he's snarling at *War Gods*, so make the most of it. Quite why we're party to such a rare treat isn't clear, but, well, doesn't he have a lovely grin when he tries?
Game of the month: *War Gods*

Tim Weaver
It's little wonder Tim's giving us an open mouthful – he's getting ready to jet off to the E3 show next month to demonstrate to scores of Americans how great he is at games. Er. Still, Weaver's doing something that we wouldn't advise most people to do: touching Wil's hair. Wash and Go? Wil doesn't even Wash. Or Go. Or shower.
Game of the month: *ISS64*

Jonathan Davies
The lad Davies may look like he's just sat on something sharp, but actually that's how he looks when he's happy. Still, you can't begrudge him a smile. He's been 'at' *Mazza Kart* all month, proclaiming himself 'the champion of the world' and insisting on being served his tea in a gold-sprayed mug.
Game of the month: *Mario Kart 64*

Wil Overton
Japan-obsessed Wil eventually had to be evicted from the *Print Club* machine, despite appearing in all the photos looking like something out of Night of the Living Dead. He's a happy chap, though: with little helper Paul to take the strain he's able to spend even more time with *Mah Jong 64*.
Game of the month: *Holy Magic Century*

Paul Jarrold
And so give a warm hand to our lovely new designer. Paul's been recruited to help Wil put together **N64** Magazine's pages, but he's also a dab hand at *Mario Kart* and is picking up mah jong impressively quickly. He is, however, from Weston-Super-Mare, and needs to work on that smile of his.
Game of the month: *Mortal Kombat Trilogy*



REGULARS







△ *It's nice to see that so much thought has gone into the most unimportant of NPCs.*



Each of the three characters plays completely differently. ▷



◁ *At the moment all the spells look pretty much the same but you can expect much, much more in the finished game.*

▽ *Nina asks for the nearest loo.*







Spooky forests? You got 'em. There are plenty of locations to explore in Holy Magic Century. ▷



HOLY MAGIC CENTURY

can Imagineer's Spirit Handlers be the missing Link?

Holy Magic Century	
IMAGINEER	
December	1
UK release January '98	







△ *Cozi overlooks one of the many detailed towns to be discovered in* Holy Magic Century.

We certainly weren't expecting this. Since our first look at Imagineer's A-RPG (that's Action RPG, like *Zelda*) – *Holy Magic Century* – in issue 1, when it went under the name *Crystal Stories*, the game has come along in leaps and bounds. And now that we've actually had a proper go on it there was nothing to do but immediately add it to our Eager Waiting chart (on page 23).

What immediately struck us was the difference in its three main characters. While before they were all constructed from rather basic looking polygons with nothing but triangles for feet, now each of the three playable adventurers is splendidly detailed and textured, and they each move in a totally distinctive way. You'll be able to choose from either a young wizard (the main character who you'll name) who sports a natty flapping cloak and knarled old magic staff (standard RPG wizard equipment), Nina, a sassy princess who, even though she's only 13 and moves like she was modelling on the catwalk, performs the standard RPG service of defence and healing, and Cozi – a powerful pirate with a neat line in stomping everywhere. The superb detailing in the characters even filters down to the many NPCs (Non Player Characters) that fill *Magic Century's* towns and villages. Each is very distinctive and easily matches what we've seen so far of *Mother 3*. Likewise, the scenery is varied and detailed, coated in a liberal dosing of medieval Europe. Towns are full of hidden nooks and crannies, while castles add more complicated elements such as bridges. All this with complete freedom of movement at a silky smooth frame rate.

While the storyline in *Holy Magic Century* could hardly be said to be revolutionary, anyone who's enjoyed any other Japanese RPGs, from *Breath of Fire* down, will be more than happy here. The whole thing hinges on what the game calls 'Spirits Handlers – people who are able to control the five magical elements that the world is created from. Unfortunately misuse of the Spirits' powers has also created the Evils (booo, hiss!) who have the unsavoury habit of feeding off man's seven deadly sins. With the Evils loose on



Hooray for Japanese designers! Where else in the world could you find a game with disturbing cat/person-type monsters in it?





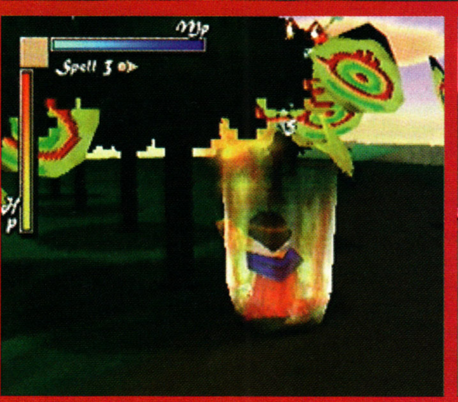
You can deal with the jellies either by magic or by just bashing them.



FIGHT IT OUT!

While *Holy Magic Century* is primarily an action RPG (at the moment, as well as being able to bash away at your enemy, the game contains four elemental magic attacks linked to the N64 controller's yellow 'C' buttons), the way you encounter battles seems to be a random affair with the pesky blighters popping up just when you least expect it. There certainly doesn't seem to be any shortage in the variety of your slimy opponents, either. From creepy hooded rats to demonic jellies-with-eyes, we rarely saw the same nasty twice, even at this stage in the game's development.









A spot of ice magic should ensure these one-eyed jellies set nicely in time for tea.

earth both monsters and men's sins are dramatically on the increase. This, as you've no doubt guessed by now, is A BAD THING but does lead to the main thrust of the story. Your young wizard is a direct descendent of a magical crystal (although at the start of the game he doesn't know it) which helped keep the Evils in check ages ago by dishing out three sacred swords. Now that things are again hotting up, it's time to seek out the swords again and defeat the Evils and the diabolical Larva, a former elemental priest who's now a Black Spirits Handler and responsible for the whole nasty mess.

Although Japanese gamers will be able to get their eager RPG-starved mitts on *Holy Magic Century* sometime this December, the usual scenario of the UK losing out might not apply in this case. Imagineer are already talking with UK publishers about releasing the game over here. All things well and good we could get it as soon as January next year. We'll keep you informed.

HOLY



In a nod to turn-based RPGs, little numbers still pop up.

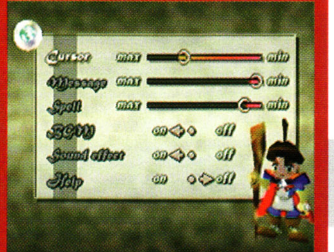


Holy Magic's environments are much more complex than you'd expect.

△ You can explore inside all the buildings too!



△ Although it's a action RPG there are still plenty of menus.



△ Change everything, from speed to whether you get help or not.



△ Out in the countryside you'll find plenty to fight.

TEAM UP!

The version of *Holy Magic Century* that **N64** Magazine got to play around with gave you access to all three playable characters. They each have their strengths and weaknesses.

Wizard

Age 12
Height 150cm
Weight 42kg
Abilities/Weapons: Magic, sword

As the main character this apprentice wizard is at the centre of *Holy Magic Century*. As he progresses through the story he'll discover his talents as a Spirit Handler and his impressive ancestry.



Princess

Age 13
Height 155cm
Weight 38kg
Abilities/Weapons: Magic (defensive), Arrows

In the great tradition of all Japanese RPGs, the princess holds the power of healing magic but, as she's also got potential as a Spirit Handler, she'll hopefully get something more exciting to do as well.



Pirate

Age 15
Height 170cm
Weight 70kg
Abilities/Weapons: Fist, sword

Holding up the raw power end of the trio is Cozi who makes up for his lack of magical abilities with sheer muscle!

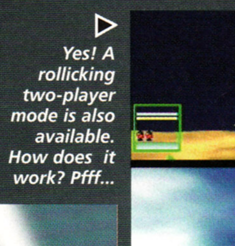


MAGIC CENTURY

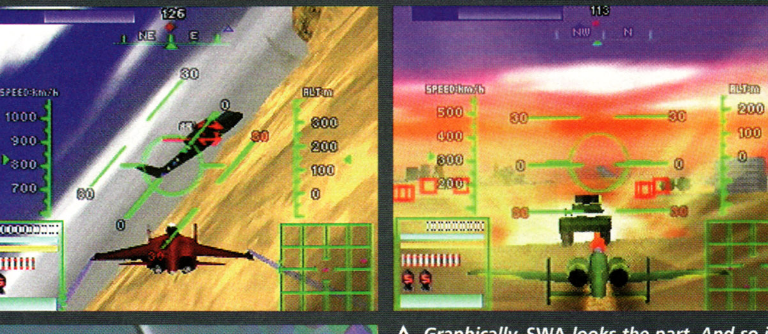
TO BE CONTINUED... We'll eagerly follow *Holy Magic's* progress in future issues.



Yes! A rollicking two-player mode is also available. How does it work? Pfff...





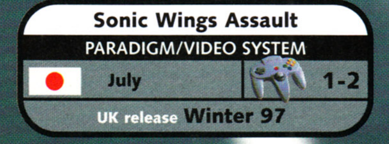


Graphically, SWA looks the part. And so it should. After all, Pilotwings re-defined flight sims with its gorgeous landscapes. Mmm.

N64 EXCLUSIVE!

SONIC WINGS ASSAULT

I wish I could fly, right up to the sky



Sonic Wings Assault	
PARADIGM/VIDEO SYSTEM	
July	1-2
UK release Winter 97	

A fully 360° camera adds to the realism. Vomit bags need careful placement.

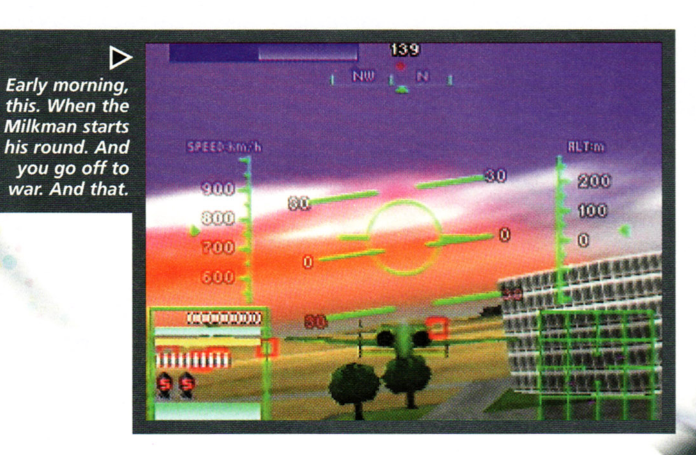


Steaming through apartment blocks. Controlled flying needed.



Frigate-exploding is very much on the menu if you're to succeed. SWA's in-game missions are strikingly created. Look. Oh, go on...





Early morning, this. When the Milkman starts his round. And you go off to war. And that.

NGS

Fresh from the smile-pile that was *Pilotwings 64*, and with three further titles in the cupboard marked 'Secret', Dallas-based Paradigm Simulations are plainly an important part of the N64's future. But it's their current alliance with Japan's Video System that's proving most exciting to flight fans. For *Sonic Wings Assault* is the N64's first straight-faced, cloud-high dogfighting game.

Mission-based, and with ten real-life aircraft, *Sonic Wings Assault* is, like *Pilotwings*, based on a former SNES favourite – in this case, *Sonic Wings*.

And Paradigm's role, once again, is to create a totally believable flying environment. As Paradigm's Development Manager, Gary Bandy, told **N64** Magazine: "We were looking for other partners to develop Nintendo 64 games with, and Video System were also looking for an N64 developer. So they've teamed with a company who's experienced on the N64 system and has the development tools to help ensure success."

Right. So, when did things start? "Development began in the winter of 1996, and the whole cycle's expected to take about ten months," explains Gary. "This is a collaborative effort between our companies. The development team directly involved includes fourteen engineers and artists from Paradigm, plus six designers, a game planner, a director and a producer from Video System." So… 23 people, then? "Yep. Video System are providing the game's direction, music and conceptual art, while Paradigm are executing the design for both art and game."

How closely, we wondered, does *Sonic Wings Assault* tie in with the SNES original? "The game *is* based on the original *Sonic Wings* series", rattles Gary, "but it's been further developed to take advantage of the Nintendo 64's technology. It now has single and two-player modes, a choice of friendly aircraft – each with its own distinctive flying characteristics – and head-to-head death matches. Weapons also now include a number of unique, futuristic choices as well." Friendly aircraft? "The friendly forces consist of four basic and two bonus aircraft. There are four pilot characters – including some from the original series -–and each will have a specific planes to fly. They'll also have distinct traits coupled with some unique, individual weapons. The enemy forces include a number of special 'boss' characters, such as stealth submarines and flying fortress bombers."

Sonic Wings Assault – or *Aero Fighters Assault*, as it'll be known in the States – sets the player up with seven basic missions, including bouts in Tokyo, the Pacific Ocean, New York, Monument Valley, the Andes, the Antarctic and then a final stage that Gary's loath to reveal. Each one demands some careful flying, and they range from the destruction of enemy frigates to defence of Tokyo's Metropolitan building.

From the screenshots it's obvious *Sonic Wings Assault* is shaping up brilliantly. Did previous dabblings with *Pilotwings* help? "Absolutely!" shouts Gary. "We learn more about the N64 all the time, and always carry our experience on into the next project." So come the winter we can look forward to a *Pilotwings* beater, then – and with guns as well! Blimey.

The feel of the game is very militaristic, thus there's some Desert Strike antics in there.

The France '98 opening ceremony becomes ridiculous.

Looks a bit like, well, StarFox 64 doesn't it? Those tunnel-things and shifting sands.

Explosions aplenty mark SWA's assault on Paradigm's already-garnered flying crown.

BIGGER, BETTER, MORE

While *Sonic Wings Assault* might be about to grab all the headlines, Gary did hint that Paradigm were hard at work on three further N64 games, one with Nintendo and a further two with Video System. "No details have yet been announced for the Nintendo game or for the other Video System titles," Gary treads carefully. Well, how about this? You're working on *Pilotwings 2*, a flight sim called *Flights of the UN* and an F1 driving game. How right are we? "No comment. Sorry." Rats. But, we'll wager you're moving away from the flight sim. "Flight sims are just one of our strengths, and we'll continue to work on them. However, within the next year you'll see other types of game from Paradigm…"

TO BE CONTINUED… Tim's off to E3 to meet up with Paradigm. More next month!







It's all about throwing, punching and kicking, rather than fancy fire balls.

STRUGGLE

only 40% complete but already

Who'd be an N64-owning beat-'em-up fan, eh? As the Americans present us with their latest attempt this month – the humdrum *War Gods* – it'd be easy to lose heart. What's really needed to perk up our spirits is a proper Japanese beat-'em-up, something that can stand alongside the likes of *Virtua Fighter* and *Tekken* without having to shuffle its feet embarrassedly. But, with Hudson's *Dual Heroes* and Konami's *Battle Dancers* an awfully long way off, no-one's yet had the chance to play a Japanese N64 beat-'em-up. Apart, that is, from us!

Imagineer's previously unannounced *Struggle Hard* is only about 40% complete at the moment, explaining why there aren't many characters in it, and also why those that are there haven't been properly textured yet, and also why they haven't thought of a proper name for it yet. ('*Struggle Hard*' is just a working title, obviously.) But already it's great fun to play – we spent a couple of hours with it – and is trying hard to do something new with the heavily exploited beat-'em-up format.

It's a proper 3D game, which is a good start, and inclines towards the *Virtua Fighter* way of doing things, with the emphasis on punches, kicks and throws rather than weapons and fireballs and things. The characters' movement is already superbly fluid, there's an impressive list of moves for each one, and the backgrounds look promising (although they haven't had any animation or anything put in yet).

Where the game really departs from tradition, however, is in the way fights are structured. Rather than adopting the regulation best-of-three-bouts-and-the-first-to-reduce-his-opponent's-energy-bar-to-zero-wins-each-time approach, Imagineer have had a bit of a think and come up with a system of points. You get one point for heaving your opponent bodily out of the ring, two points for picking up your opponent and dashing him against the ground, and three points for finishing him off with a special move. (The rings are all high-up, so the consequences of missing your footing are painful.) Imagineer also promise customisable two-player tournaments, where you'll be able to adjust parameters like the size of the ring and the way the points system works, and then save all the details to a Controller Pak to carry around with you.

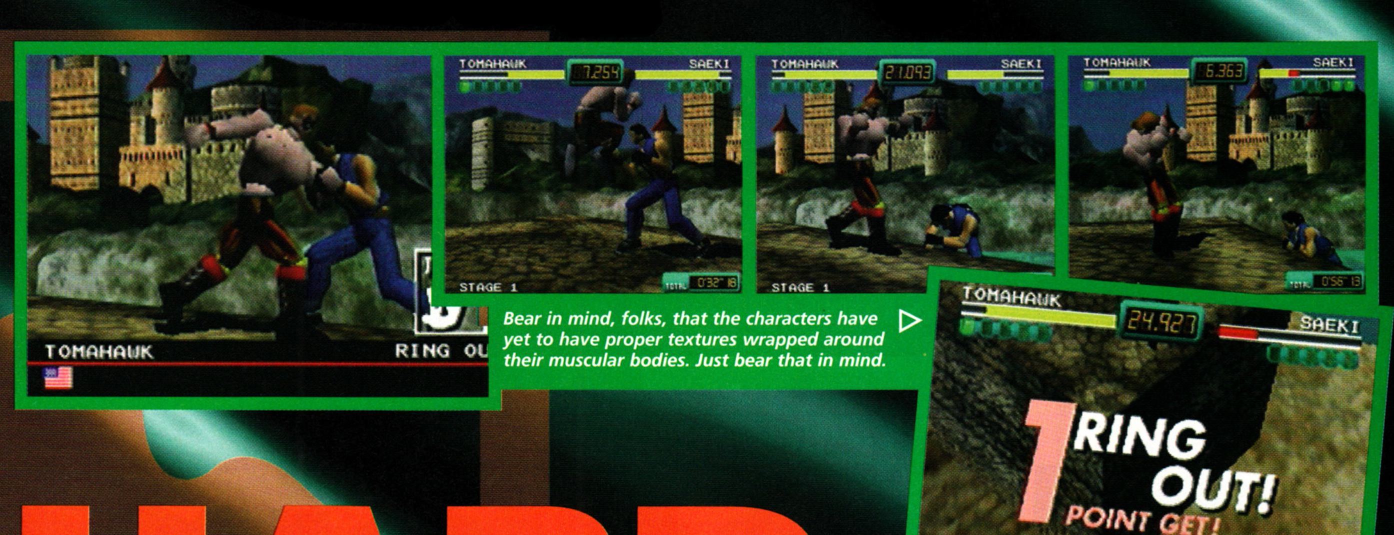
Imagineer look like they're rapidly becoming one of the most important developers in the N64's arsenal, with *Multi Racing Championship* and *Holy Magic Century* both looking fabulous, and other projects being signed up left, right and centre in Japan thanks to a recent influx of cash to the company. And *Struggle Hard* (or whatever it eventually becomes known as) could turn out to be the jewel in their crown – as well as the answer to the prayers of Nintendo fans awaiting a successor to *Street Fighter II*.

Expect to see the finished game before the year's out with a review of Leviathan proportions to follow here in **N64** Magazine.



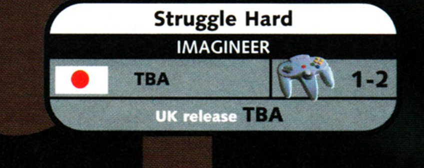


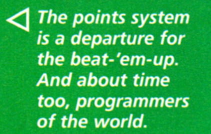
The action replay shows a two-point-scoring 'knock-down' in progress.



Bear in mind, folks, that the characters have yet to have proper textures wrapped around their muscular bodies. Just bear that in mind.

HARD
looking smashing







The points system is a departure for the beat-'em-up. And about time too, programmers of the world.



'Crown' will, we suspect, be renamed something more akin to 'Clown'.



TO BE CONTINUED... More news as the game takes shape over the months to come.



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30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK
Telephone 01225 442244

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Editor	Jonathan Davies
Art Editor	Wil Overton
Deputy Editor	James Ashton
Reviews Editor	Tim Weaver
Art Assistant	Paul Jarrold
US Correspondent	Doug Perry
Japanese Correspondent	Game Japan
Tokyo Desk	Max Everingham
Contributors	Zy Nicholson, Mark Ramshaw, Jason Moore
Advertising Manager	Jo Pagett
International licensing enquiries	Katie Cunningham, Tel 0171 331 3920 Fax 0171 447 3499, kcunningham@pne.co.uk
Group Production Manager	Judith Green
Production Manager	Richard Gingell
Production Co-ordinator	Charlotte Brock
Print Services Co-ordinator	Jeremy Fisher
Print Services Manager	Matthew Parker
Promotions Manager	Tamara Ward
Publisher	Chris Power
Assistant Publisher	Alison Morton
Publishing Director	Jane Ingham
Managing Director	Greg Ingham

Fax (editorial) 01225 732275
Fax (advertising) 01225 732282
E-mail n64@futurenet.co.uk

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Welcome Mario

The N64's second big game arrives, and Nintendo celebrate with a real-life karting grand prix.

Friday the 13th of June was the inauspicious launch date for the N64's second *Mario* game, *Mario Kart 64*. The 64-bit version of the classic SNES game has found near-universal praise around the world, and now hopes to do the same in Britain and the rest of Europe.

The game, released a mysterious two weeks earlier than originally scheduled, is considered by Nintendo to be the N64's second most-important game after *Super Mario 64*. Featuring eight of Nintendo's best-loved game characters, it should cement the N64's already firm position in the UK.

One of *Mario Kart 64's* best features is its superb four-player mode – it's the first game to take advantage of the N64's unique set of four joypad ports. To draw attention to this, Nintendo will launch a range of coloured joypads, previously only available on import. The pads come in five new colours (blue, red, green, yellow and black), and help players to see easily which port their pad is attached to. It's expected that the colour pads will retail at the same price as their plainer, grey counterparts.

Meanwhile, to celebrate the UK launch of *Mario Kart 64*, Nintendo organised a go-kart race party at London's famous Daytona Circuit in White City. The indoor track is the largest in the UK, and makes use of gearless 100cc go-karts to propel drivers around its tight and twisting corners at speeds approaching 40 mph. **N64** magazine is pleased to report that James, our representative at the event, sailed through the four initial heats to qualify tenth on the final grid. As the only driver racing without a road licence, he was delighted with his final position of fifth overall. (*Sounds about right.* – Ed)

"I had a couple of second places in the heats, but a mistake and a spin put me down to fifth in the first," explained an exhausted James after the final. "Getting taken out by a back-marker in the last heat didn't help my qualifying position much either. If I could have



started a bit further up the grid, I reckon I could have challenged for the podium. As it was, I took advantage of some spinners on the first corner, overtook a couple on laps four and six, and was quite happy with fifth. That's a point-scoring position in most competitive races, after all."

28 competitors raced at the meeting, representing the majority of the UK's computer games media. Although there were eight N64 booths provided as trackside entertainment

MORE CASH, LESS PROFIT?

Nintendo released their financial results last month for the financial year ending in March '97. The good news (for them) was that the amount of money the company took from sales was up by 15% – the first rise in four years. The total amount raised was ¥345 billion (an incredible £1.725 billion), with the majority coming from sales outside Japan, mainly in the United States.

However, because Nintendo had to pay off large debts incurred by closing their Belgian, Dutch and French subsidiaries, profits actually declined by 14% to a piffling ¥101 billion (£500 million). A spokesman described the results as "not so bad", and predicted sales of ¥400 billion (£2 billion) for this year, yielding ordinary profits of ¥114 billion (£570 million).

HUDSON PAD UP

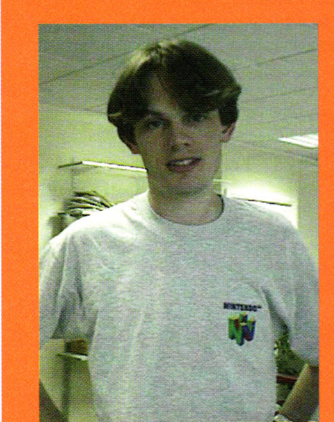
The Japanese are to get their own third-party N64 pad when Hudson release their 'Joycard' this summer. The pad, costing ¥2980 (£15), will feature a 24 shots-per-second autofire button and a mysterious "adjustable option" that allows it to be "comfortable even if you hold the pad in a very particular way". There are no plans (yet) for a European release.

to Kart!

between races, most drivers were more concerned with discussing tactics and taking a break from the heat of their fire-proof racing suits to be distracted by even the greatness of *Mario Kart 64*. And, while the lack of any serious accidents was seen as a bit of a disappointment by some of the more competitive magazine journalists present, overall the event was agreed to be a fitting launch for this highly important game.

• **N64** Magazine received an early copy of the British version of *Mario Kart*, and you can read the results of our intensive review starting on page 30. And, just as the rest of the world has been competing for ever-faster times since the launch of their version of the game, from now on we'll be running a *Mario Kart* league in 'I'm the Best!' Get practising and send in your times!

WIN! the shirt off James's back!



If you'd like to win the actual N64 race shirt that James wore on his storming drive to fifth place, answer the question below on a postcard and send it to:

Clothe Me Compo,
N64 Magazine,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath BA1 2BW

by July 25th. Don't worry, we'll insist he washes the petrol fumes out before he sends it to you.

Q: How many control pedals are there on a 100cc go-kart?

THE N64 BOARD

The N64 Magazine office seems to accumulate enormous amounts of 'stuff', which, for safekeeping, we pin onto the N64 Board.

Postcard from Hell, sent in by Norwegian reader Jarle Nilssen. 'Hell' in Norwegian means 'luck', apparently.

Paper hankies. Given to one of our readers on the streets of Tokyo by a schoolgirl. Truth!

Computer Generated Mario. It's a bit disturbing up close, to be honest. And we lost the author's name. Always write your name on the back of artwork – you wouldn't believe the state of this office.

A Whomp. Actually sent in as an explanation for a tip but we thought it looked better on the board.

Rather fine Super Mario picture done on computer and colour printer. Well done to Jon Davies of Littlestone.

Sailor Moon trading card? Well it's definitely Sailor Moon anyway and it's from Tekin Suleyman, who again pleads for Wil to 'do' the covers. It's NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN. Okay?

Sheepskin Belly Button Warmer. Useful in July! Thanks S Johnson of Essex.

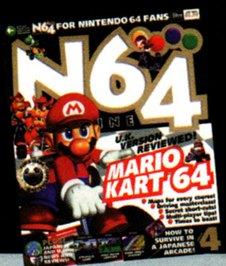
Blank space.
(Do you have anything that might fill it? Then send it quickly to: The N64 Board, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.)

GO! GO!

SORRY WE'RE LATE (AGAIN)

Yes, yes, we know, and we're sorry. As you've probably noticed, this issue of N64 is slightly later to the newsstands than we originally promised. Unfortunately, we'd finished the entire issue when Wil's dog got hold of the master copy and ate it. Well, most of it. Anyway, we had to do the whole lot again, working late into and through the night to get issue 4 out to an increasingly-impatient public.

Fortunately, since the unfortunate mastication incident, Wil's dog has been run over by a large articulated lorry, negating the need for James to dispose of it humanely.



WE HAVE A WINNER!

As you probably saw last issue, Lee Riley from Blackburn was the lucky winner of Issue 1's competition. Lee will soon be the happy recipient of a very large telly, an N64, four N64 chairs and some crispy snacky stuff – as soon as we've worked out how to get it all to him, that is.

In case you were wondering, the answers to the questions were: Sunday, Sub Zero, 1'20"43 (although we'd have accepted 1'20"22), and 120 Stars (although we'd have accepted 70). We're not going to list all the J-League teams – Lee chose Grampus 8 and Red Diamonds and they were good enough for us. We got thousands upon thousands of entries, as you'll be able to see. Bad luck if, well, you're not Lee Riley from Blackburn.



New Goods

More bits and pieces to accompany your N64

MEMORY CARD PLUS

Datel • 01785 810800 • £15

The one thing the N64 isn't short of is third-party memory cards, but the Datel Memory Card Plus does have a little more to offer over many of the packs that have gone before. Like most other third-party offerings it's a 1Mb card (that's four times bigger than a standard Nintendo Pak), using four 'pages' of 256K each. The clever bit comes with the LED display on the pack, which indicates which of the four pages is currently in use. To switch between pages (the N64 can only address 256K of pack memory at a time) you simply press Reset on your N64 along with the small button on the back of the pack. The LED light changes and we all know exactly where we are. The system works well enough, and at £15 you're paying 1.5p per K of memory, as opposed to almost 6p per K with the official Nintendo version. The packs also come in green, blue, red and yellow, allowing you to coordinate with your joypad. Which is, you know, nice.

95%

SHARKPAD PRO 64

InterAct • 01204 862026 • £30

For all you clear plastic electronics fans out there, the Sharkpad Pro is your chance to see what the inside of a joypad really looks like. 'Not that fascinating' is the disappointing answer, but as the Sharkpad shares its mechanical innards with InterAct's previous entry into the N64 peripheral market, the Super Pad Plus (Issue 2, 86%), you won't be disappointed with the pad's feel and response. We're still using one in the office, if that's any guide. Apart from the see-through gimmick, the pad's claimed advantages over the similarly-priced official alternative are the autofire and slow motion functions. As we've yet to find a game in which these are useful, how appealing you find the Sharkpad probably comes down to a matter of personal taste. The cleverly shaped Super Pad Plus is still your best third-party bet, in our opinion.

72%

NINTENDO BATH GAME

Supermarkets • £3

Having something to play with in the bath is a fine idea. And the Nintendo Bath Game not only resembles a Game Boy, but also comes filled with 225ml of rather watery bath/shower gel. The liquid-filled game itself (ours featuring Donkey Kong in the background) involves squirting little plastic hoops onto spikes – and, taxingly, getting each hoop onto the spike of the same colour. The only snag is that the rigidity of the screen makes it rather hard to squirt out the gel.



75%

64DD gets a release date!

And Donkey Kong too! But no modem, and no show at E3.

Nintendo have finally announced a release date for their eagerly anticipated N64 disk drive, the 64DD. It's March 1998, however – rather later than originally forecast – and that's in Japan, too. Because of this set-back the 64DD wasn't expected to be shown at America's E3 exhibition. And, contrary to widely reported rumours, the device won't include a modem.

While the 'loss' of the modem won't come as that much of a surprise – with the low price-point Nintendo have been aiming at (they're now talking about ¥10,000 – a rush-to-the-shops £50) it always did look too good to be true – a March release will be bad news for Nintendo of Japan. Incredibly, the N64 isn't doing particularly well in its home country, where gamers are sceptical about the machine's capabilities when it comes to RPGs, the most popular type of game, and there's a lack of software generally. However, after the failure of Sega's Mega-CD and the non-appearance of their own Super Famicom CD drive, Nintendo want to ensure that the 64DD gets the best debut possible.

A spokesman for the company, Mr Yoshio Hongo, explained the thinking behind the far-distant release date: "The hardware is completed," he reassured Tokyo journalists. "We're ready to bring it into full production. However, software development is behind schedule and we want to ensure that the drive goes on sale with at least four games." Asked why the drive would not be shown at E3, Mr Hongo explained that Nintendo were concentrating on "enriching the line-up of cartridges" for the N64 itself,



VIDEO NATION

To keep US gamers excited, Nintendo of America have sent out a free video to all subscribers to Nintendo Power (NoA's own games magazine) as well as US N64ers who returned their N64 warranty cards.

The video features new footage of *GoldenEye* (including its new 4-player mode) as well as lots of older game footage. "Not as good as the video that came with issue 1 of **N64**" was our unbiased verdict.



and that with a launch date so far into the future, exhibiting now seemed a little pointless.

As for the games Mr Hongo mentions, five games new titles have recently appeared on Japanese release schedules: *Pocket Monsters 64*, *Sim City 64*, *Mario Paint 64*, *Super Mario RPG 2* and – most intriguingly – *Ultra Donkey Kong*. Though none have release dates specified, all are listed as disk games…

SHIGS'S SHOWTIME

Nintendo to throw a party at E3

A 'Media Event' hosted by Nintendo at this year's E3 show in Atlanta should see the unveiling of several new N64 games, including *Banjo & Kazooie* (which is the cringe-worthy new name for what used to be called *Dream*) and, possibly, the recently announced *Ultra Donkey Kong*. Journalists present will also have the opportunity to talk with Shigeru Miyamoto, Mario's dad, about the future of the N64 and the 64DD. British development team Rare will also be in attendance.

The good news for N64 readers is that **N64** Magazine will be present at the event and will bring you a full report in issue 5. We'll also be bringing you news of any other new games that're announced at the show, as well as all the industry rumour and gossip that comes our way.

RETROWORLD

with Jason Moore

Dig out your Farrahs and slip on your loafers as we turn back the clock once again to the days when you were lucky to have 64K, let alone 64 bits...

Nintendo's success in the games industry is unparalleled by any other company. From filling everyone's pockets with Game & Watches and Game Boys to bringing the first true 64-bit machine to the market, Nintendo seem to have a magic touch. Unfortunately, even Paul Daniels would have had a difficult job preventing the company's biggest flop. The Virtual Boy was released in Japan a couple of years ago, with a release in the US a few months later. Despite strong support from Nintendo and a few third party companies, production of the machine was stopped at the end of last year.

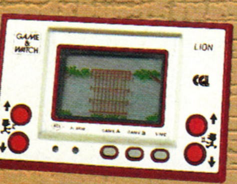
If you haven't seen or heard of the VB, then imagine a virtual reality headset mounted on top of a tripod. Games are displayed on two eye-sized screens set inside the unit, with sound being aimed into your ears through adjacent stereo speakers. Spend your money on a Virtual Boy and you'll be seeing red, literally, although the monochrome screens do display many shades of the colour. The 3D effect the 32-bit machine creates is excellent, allowing for impressive special effects and genuine gameplay enhancements. In addition, the twenty-five games available for the machine include some essential Nintendo classics.

The reason for harping-on about the Virtual Boy is that it's one of the fastest-growing formats in the Retro Scene. While the machines are still quite easy to obtain thanks to the glut of unsold American units, many games were released in Japan that weren't released in the US. These include Taito's official *Super Space Invaders*, *Virtual Fishing* and *Gundam*. In the inevitable Japanese VB clearout, machines dropped to £25, while games fell to the equivalent of £1.75! The rapid sell out of these games has resulted in a very quick rise in collector's prices, with *Super Space Invaders* now fetching £50-plus.

With recent rumours of a VB *Mario Kart* prototype cartridge, and the existence of a SNES-style VB development console capable of playing VB games on a TV using a standard controller, the format will remain one of the most collectable for years to come.

LION GAME & WATCH

If you think retrogaming is dull, then you should play *Lion*. In this 1981 handheld, you control two lion tamers whose job it is to keep a group of lions in their cage by blocking them with chairs. Excited yet? Well, each tamer moves in only three positions and is controlled with simple Up and Down buttons. Excited now? Oh well, how about this? If you fail to contain a lion, it chases you into the bushes. Seeking refuge in a tree you watch as out from the bushes pounces the beast, tearing your fragile torso to shreds before devouring your innards. Well, sort of...



Apart from a smaller screen than regular G&Ws, *Lion's* most interesting feature is that, for a pre-*Mario* title, the characters look just a tiny bit Italian…

RETRORATING



CASTLEVANIA 3 (NES)

In this tale of Gothic horror your task is to fight your way through seventeen levels, including the Tombs of Terror, the Sunken City of PolterGeists and the Clock Tower of Untimely Death. Now, to take on such a mission you might think you're put in control of Gorgon the mighty warrior, or maybe Syrax the fearless she-vamp. But no, meet Trevor! Don't worry, though, Trevor reckons he's pretty hard, and can mutate into different characters in later levels. While as a platformer the game plays well, there are a few decision-making sections which do little to add to the story. Also, despite the levels' scary names, they're a bit easy, and using the password system the game shouldn't be too difficult to complete. On the plus side there's some excellent music, a common feature in Konami releases, which must rate as some of the best tunes on the NES.

RETRORATING 68%

LIFEBOAT GAME & WATCH

Game & Watches are often quite weird in their conception. Some have you running a factory, some have you spraying plants in a greenhouse, and some have you working overtime as a Security Guard. Hardly exciting concepts! But *Lifeboat* sees you rescuing innocent passengers from a sinking ship. This double screen game features impressive graphics of a ship on fire, and at the bottom are two rafts with which to catch the falling passengers. Once you've caught them, you must move the rafts to the safety of the adjacent islands, where a man is waiting to pull the survivors off. Miss a passenger and they're left stranded in the water, and it only takes a second for a shark to come and eat them. The most impressive feature on this G&W is the animated smoke which pours from the ship.



RETRORATING 75%

BUBBLE BOBBLE (NES)

If I mention the names Bub and Bob, you'll either think of the goldfish on Playschool or two cute dinosaurs who grew up to be people. Bubble Bobble was the first outing for Taito's premier game characters, and is still most gamers' favourite. The scenario goes like this: last night Bub and Bob had a dodgy kebab after a night down the pub, and now, when they burp, they yak up a bobble of green mucus. Luckily, they can trap their angry mates in the bubbles and pop them to see them fly around the room. A great laugh! This classic, single-screen pop-'em-up rates as one of the most playable games ever made, and the NES version is one of the best. The catchy music will stay in your head longer than a Spice Girls ditty, and with two-player simultaneous play you'll spend hours trying to battle to the end.



RETRORATING 88%

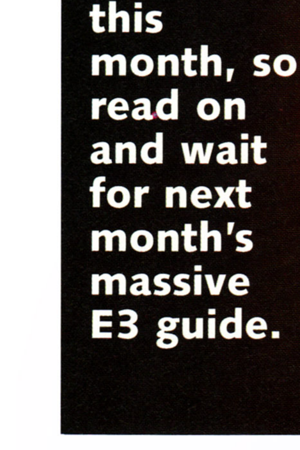
• Jason Moore runs Britain's premier retro fanzine, *Retrogames*. If you'd like to know more, contact him at: *Retrogames*, 61 Baccara Grove, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK2 3AS.





It takes all sports

Sports games, then. Oh, there's plenty of them, though 'decent' sports are patently missing. American Football, indeed. Still, there's new shots, new info and reams of rumour this month, so read on and wait for next month's massive E3 guide.



With balmy days upon us, what better time to perform info surgery on the N64's new sports games?

QUARTERBACK CLUB '98				
IGUANA/ACCLAIM	64M	1-4	WINTER '97	TBA



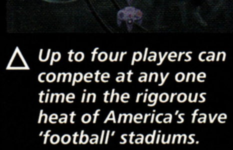
The UK's American football fans – all four of them – are in for a real old treat this winter.

Iguana, after first re-injecting some freshness into the first-person maim-'em-up with *Turok*, are now turning their attention sportsward. Boasting offensive plays designed by Brett Farve (er…) and the vocals of America's favourite commentator, Marv Albert (eh?), Iguana are plainly serious about making *QuarterBack Club* as realistic as possible.

Bob Picunko of Acclaim agrees with them: "We're excited to have the first and only licensed N64 football game on the market for the 1997 season. By combining our advanced motion capture technology with the speed and superior graphics capabilities of the Nintendo 64, we've been able to create a game that would have even Vince Lombardi doing a double take." Whoever he might be.

So, what does the licence entitle them to? Well, over 1500 real NFL players and 30 teams are spread across 29 NFL stadiums (all rendered using plans and photographs of the originals) to create a city-filling amount of stats. Everything's been gleaned from the 1996/97 season, including actual players' weights, heights and jockstrap sizes (er, maybe). Full-colour photos will also add to that cosy feeling.

The game's second claim to fame is its AI. Injuries and penalties will affect players' motivation, so if you suddenly get some offence 'stuck down your neck' (whatever that means), then your players are going to traipse about the field uninspired. Random weather, team-specific comments from our man Marv and multiple dressing room choices also add flavour to the already potent feel. Exciting stuff, yes?





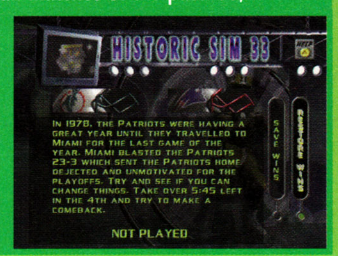
△ Up to four players can compete at any one time in the rigorous heat of America's fave 'football' stadiums.

Actual in-game screenshots. And you can't moan at their cast-iron quality. NOPE! ▽



When time stood still

Although you'll more than likely find yourself drowning in *QuarterBack Club's* pre-match option waters, there's one preference that offers something a little bit different. The Historic Sim option allows you to take on a playing part in famous American Football matches of the past. So, if you've always felt you could have saved the Patriots from losing to Miami in 1978, now's your chance to prove it. This inclusion, an interesting take on *ISS64's* Scenario mode, should assure plenty of longevity.



WCW VS NWO: WORLD TOUR

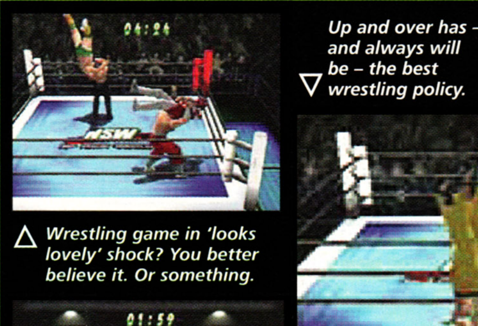
T•HQ	64M	1-4	WINTER '97	TBA

With their better-than-expected PlayStation game *WCW vs The World* having occupied the top of the American charts seemingly for years, T•HQ have predictably released details of an N64 version already in development. So, again, the WCW will be freely able to pit their wits against 'world-famous' wrestlers like clothes-freak Ultimo Dragon and personality-drenched 200 Hits in an all-out slam and, erm, jam.

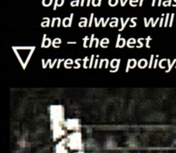
Sixty characters will be available, along with a Trade Shop where you can off-load comedian The Undertaker in favour of pant-machines like Ric Flair and 'Macho Man' Randy Savage.

Just as in the PlayStation version, the camera goes about its business automatically, leaving you plenty of time to familiarise yourself with each wrestler's moves. In fact, T•HQ reckon there're as many as 40-50 moves per character, so, unlike with other slap-'em-ups, it should take some time to figure out every possible manoeuvre. On top of that, you can create your own belts – with hilarious renaming consequences – and take part in a four-player tag-team-style set-up.

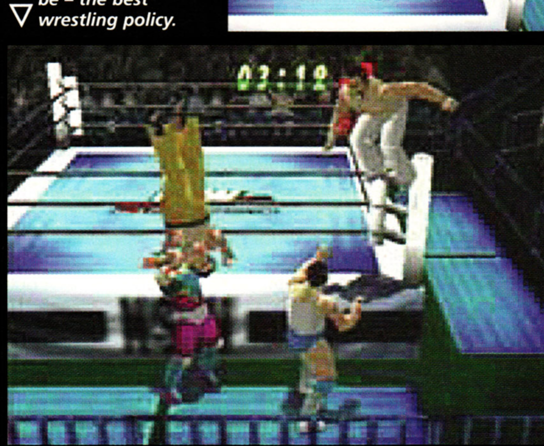
Oh, and it looks lovely as well.



Wrestling game in 'looks lovely' shock? You better believe it. Or something.



Up and over has – and always will be – the best wrestling policy.



TOP GEAR RALLY





BOSS/KEMCO/BMG	64M	TBA	AUTUMN '97	TBA

Now over three-quarters complete, *Top Gear Rally* is expected to show at E3, but won't find find a release slot until later in the year (and almost certainly after Imagineer's *Multi-Racing Championship).*

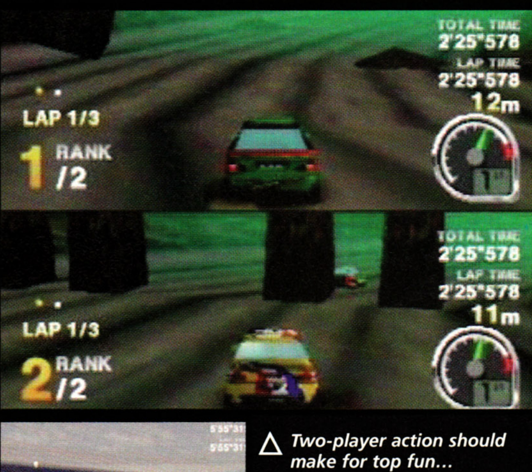
However, the most recent version looks hugely promising, with in-game visuals supremely slick and the driving game's nightmare, pop-up, almost non-existent thanks to discreet fog effects.

The game boasts a number of unique features. A configurable weather set-up allows players to choose the racing conditions. Quite whether *Top Gear Rally* has captured the smooth sheen of snow and rain-laden surfaces as well as *Multi-Racing Championship* is unclear, but dabbling in night fog and flash floods is happily encouraged.

Secondly, the vehicles may still be based on their real-life counterparts. Boss ran into trouble over their plans to use several of the cars, with the Escort 2000, Toyota Celica and Porsche originally being bandied about. However, reports now suggest that things should be straightened out in time for June's show in Atlanta.

Thirdly, there are a number of inspired graphical touches. Puddles of water will reflect the sky and car bodies as you pass them by, while car headlights will respond superbly to the vehicles' various movements, wobbling from side to side and up and down. Snow will also stick to the wheels in colder temperatures.

As in *Multi-Racing* there'll be multiple branching routes on all the tracks. Power slides will have to be mastered for effective cornering, and once all the tracks have been beaten you'll be able to play them backwards. And! *Top Gear* will be Rumble Pak compatible.



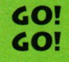
Two-player action should make for top fun...

...although, the one-player mode has enough thrills.

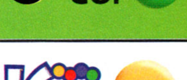


The contest between Multi-Racing and Top Gear Rally...

... is, indeed, hotting up. Boss' game, though, appears to have stronger visuals.







Jim worms back for threquel

EARTHWORM JIM 3

VIS/INTERPLAY	64M	TBA	 EARLY '98	 EARLY '98

With a game style that follows the adage that if something is worth a third interpretation it's worth putting a 'D' on the end and adding a third dimension, Interplay's latest outing for the worm will mark their debut on the N64.

While the fruit loops at California-based Shiny Entertainment were responsible for the first two cartoon-style platformers, this decidedly more ambitious adventure comes Dunfermline-based VIS Interactive.

Opting for a true 3D environment, VIS have designed each of the levels to be non-linear, although key sections as well as a number of sub-games help retain structure. Care has been taken to retain a cartoonish approach, despite the use of polygonal characters. "We're going all-out to create a real-time 3D cartoon", says VIS founder Chris van der Kuyl. "We've come up with an on-the fly rendered black outline for the 3D shapes, which gives an excellent cartoony look and feel. It looks very Tex Avery or Warner Bros."

A voxel-based graphics technique is also being used, which enables the artists to distort facial detail without worrying about the polygon count. "A lot of game characters feel too solid," adds Chris. "Jim feels nice and stretchy."

The obstacles facing the gun-toting worm in *EWJ3D* come from his own diminutive brain, the game-world actually representing a world of make-believe that Jim's descended into following a blow to the head. So the five worlds (spanning 30-odd levels) are themed around aspects of Jim's personality, including the horror-movie Fear World, the Wild West antics of Fantasy World, and the puzzle-based design of Intelligence World.

Conceding that *Mario* is the benchmark, Chris is equally keen to emphasise that *EWJ3D* is anything but a clone. "When you see the first generation of N64 titles, it's obvious how we can take it to the next level," concludes Chris. "We really feel this is going to be one of the first interactive cartoons."

Yep, well, hardly likely to knock your proverbial socks off but it's EARLY DAYS in EJ3's life. Remember that, eh?



The switch to 3D, then. Nice for Jim. And nice for us come next year.







Seta wild at chop rumours

NEW INFO!

WILD CHOPPERS

SETA	64M	1	
SUMMER '97		TBA	

So, then, *Wild Choppers* for the chop? This month it would appear not. Seta, quick to trample on whispers that their summer-bound copter-caper was being dug a hole in console graveyard, released another batch of Choppers screenshots and have been heavily advertising the game in the Japanese press. But they still haven't announced a new release date after *Choppers* disappeared from schedules last month, with "July" being the most specific they're prepared to get.

Meanwhile, the game looks better and better with each new picture we see, with some massive explosions and a mission-based structure which has you controlling a different pilot and (imaginary) helicopter gunship on each level. Objectives range from ground targets, to enemy choppers, to escorting an airliner, and there are some nifty heat-seeking missiles along with a selection of power-ups.

If *Wild Choppers* is indeed released in July we'll be able to bring you an import review either next issue or the one after.

Midway wheels in motion

CRUIS'N WORLD

MIDWAY	64M	1-2	TBA	TBA

Mmm. After the travesty that was *Cruis'n USA*, Eugene Jarvis and his Midway mates are hard at work on the follow-up.

Gleaned from the coin-op, *Cruis'n World* – or *Cruis'n the World* as it may well become – looks and sounds like its predecessor. No excuse for that, certainly, but Midway assure **N64** that, vitally, it will *play* substantially differently from *USA* (which, bizarrely, has been one of America's top-selling games since its release).

Now, instead of the cardboard streets of San Francisco being the setting for some badly-handled driving, there are sundry world venues, with the Great Wall of China, Red Square and the Pyramids all ready and willing to have the three new vehicles rallying along and across them. Ffff.



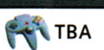
Just look at the quality of that, daddy-o! Yep, Cruis'n World's just bound to be an improvement over its rubbish predecessor.



64DD monsters in your pocket

Nintendo gives role-players another reason to be happy.

POCKET MONSTERS 64

NINTENDO/CREATURES INC/GAME FREAK INC	64DD	 TBA	 MARCH '98	 TBA

The title that has kept the Game Boy alive for the past two years, selling over 2.5 million copies, has finally been officially announced for the N64.

Put simply, *Pocket Monsters* was an RPG where you had to battle and capture monsters. That might seem a trifle dull, but add to it the ability to train any captured creature and then link up with a friend's GB to see who's monster's the biggest and best, and you can see just why the Tamagotchi-loving Japanese went so mad for this '90s answer to conkers. It was the natural follow-up to the Barcode Battler!

Even though *Pocket Monsters 2* is on the way to the GB this summer, Nintendo have given the 64DD an enormous shot in the arm by announcing that *Pocket Monsters 64* will be available at the disk drive's launch next March. The reason to go for the 64DD is obvious. Its read-write capacity means monster customisation beyond your wildest dreams, and, while you might not think it now, this is just about the best RPG news the N64 could get.

Lots more info soon...

△ Pocket Monsters 2 on the Game Boy. We can only dream.



Goemon gets a date!

Good news for fans of that lovable rogue *Goemon* is that Konami have finally set a date for the release of his latest adventures. Japanese import gamers should mark their diaries for August 7th.

Apart from a suitably bizarre advertising campaign, Konami have revealed tantalising glimpses of all four playable characters in action and even an airborne ride on a giant oriental dragon. Prepare for *Goemon* overload in a few issues' time.






Greetings! Every month from now on, I, the great FuSoYa, will journey from the Moon in the Big Whale to answer your RPG queries. *(Sorry about this. – Ed)* It's proving to be a slow start for N64 role players, but with *Zelda, Mother* and *Holy Magic Century* around the corner I'm confident there are only good times ahead. Now, challenge my knowledge. I dare you!

To start with we have Ajwad Mobayed from Belfast who asks FuSoYa:

1. I have no intentions of selling my N64, but it tortures me to see the stunning *Final Fantasy VII* and *Final Fantasy Tactics* on the PlayStation. So are Square Soft planning to make *any* RPG's on the N64?

2. Would it be possible to fit a game like *FFVII* onto an N64 cart plus several 64DD disks?

3. Are there any multi-character, turn-based RPGs being planned for the 64DD, apart from *Mother3*?

4. Is *Mother 3* likely to see a UK release?

5. Could you please think about including a specialised RPG section in your magazine to provide up-to-date news and developments on the RPG front?

FySoYa casts 'answer':

1. Consider yourself fortunate, Ajwad. This month is the first and only time I will answer that question about the mighty Square!

At the moment Square are only developing for two platforms – PlayStation and Windows 95. Square in Japan chose the Sony machine because of its large installed user base and because CDs provided the storage space they required for the pre-rendered backdrops and FMV in FFVII *and* SaGa Frontier.

Square in America are assisting on some Japanese projects as well as handling the reprogramming of FFVII *for the PC platform. They also have some projects of their own in development such as the recently announced co-production* Parasite Eve.

The official line is that they have no intention of developing for the N64 at the moment because of cartridge size restrictions. When the 64DD comes along they'll think again.

2. Of course it would! But considering FFVII *fills the best part of three CDs, each capable of holding 650Mb of data, you'd need around 25 to 30 DD disks to handle the game as it stands now. Any 64DD* Final Fantasy *title would need a radical re-think in game design terms. It should, however, be more than feasible to have N64 versions of other Square PS titles like* Front Mission Alternative, Bushido Blade *and* Tobal. *(Not RPGs, though, I know – sorry.)*

3. Not that FuSoYa knows of, but there are unsubstantiated rumours of a Namco RPG and a N64 version of Suikoden. *And remember that we still don't know if* Mother 3 *is turn-based.*

4. I don't see why not but it's far too early to tell.

5. Correct me if I'm wrong but I think this is it.

So there we have it. I'm tired now and must return to my lunar home to tend the crystals. If you have an RPG question that simply must be answered, send it to me at:

Ask FuSoYa, N64 Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

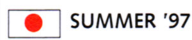
If your question is deemed worthy of an answer I will reward you with an N64 badge. Ask me a silly question however, and I will cast Meteo! You have been warned.





Twist and shout

CHAMELEON TWIST

NIHON SYSTEM SUPPLY	64M	1-4	 SUMMER '97	 TBA

Tongues aplenty are on the menu this summer as Nihon crack on with their probably-Japanese-released-only platform lick-'em-up.

Not to be confused with the Mega Drive's rubbish *Kid Chameleon*, Nihon's game gives the eponymous reptile extra-ordinary tongue powers, hopefully sparing *Twist* from the *Mario 64* comparisons all N64 platform adventures are liable to.

Basically, green-boy can use his tongue in three ways. The first is to kill enemies by wrapping his pink thing round them, squeezing tight and popping their proverbial clogs for them. The second is by pulling enemies in, spitting them back out and killing off additional nasties that may be in the way. The third is by far the nicest. Releasing his trusted licker, he can cling on to hooks and platforms, thus helping him progress through the levels.

Chameleon Twist incorporates two play modes: Story Mode, in which a single player will take on hordes of nasties in a straightforward level-jumper, and Battle Mode, which will more than likely pit four players against each other in a split-screen kind of way. The latter of these, though, has yet to be sorted out.

The game is hardly likely to have the buying public jostling for space in Electronics Boutique, as Nihon have steered clear of every transparency and lighting effects in the Miyamoto effects book, but its simple looks are really quite charming and suit the style of the game. Indeed, Nihon themselves are quick to admit *Chameleon Twist* is aimed at the younger end of the market.



△ *Old Licksy, there, might truly be the N64's second Mario. Though, probably not.*



△ *"Get a load o' me!" shouts the chameleon. And so well he can. No one's got a tongue like that. Except Wil that is. Who is, as mentioned elsewhere, a freak.*



△ *Talking of the Boy Overton, there's nothing he likes more than seas of Japanese text. Bless.*

Enix's treasure chest close

NEW PICS!

GO GO!! TROUBLEMAKERS

TREASURE/ENIX	64M	 1-2	 JUNE 27TH	 TBA

With *Troublemakers'* Japanese release date barely days away (it'll be out by the time you read these words), we at N64 are understandably moist of brow. And to fuel our appetites still further, Treasure forwarded these new screenshots.

The premise should already be crystal clear in your brains: after mad-lad Professor Gumbel goes missing, his robotic housemaid Marina sets off into the weird world of Nendoro in search of him. This sets up proceedings lovingly for some surrealist platform-based shooting, with the switch between 2D and 3D in the boss sections making for a uniquely attractive experience. We'll have a full import review next month. Overton hasn't been so excited since *Mah Jong 64: The Return of Fuji Matasari* arrived in the office...



△ *2D platformer or not, the visuals are splendid.*

Fast-as-a-rocket, side-scrolling bullet-fest. Hmm. ▷

An ear to the ground

The weeks prior to America's E3 show are traditionally bleaker in the news department than a particularly bleak winter in bleak old Scotland, and this year has been no different.

The theme this month has been more about rumour than concrete fact-bombs, with *Tomb Raider 64* coming under the cosh once more. Sony, it would seem, have been fretting about the proposed N64 version stealing their thunder, and have been in discussion with Eidos about making the next *Tomb Raider* adventure PlayStation-only. *TR2* is already well into its stride (and looking particularly lovely), while a 64-bit outing for the Lara-laden quest-fest hasn't yet begun development. More news is expected at Atlanta.

Elsewhere, with Bandai's brief marriage to Sega called off this month, the developers behind anime licenses such as *Dragonball Z, Sailor Moon* and *Gundam* are now free to start delving into Nintendo territory once again.

Manchester's Software Creations – who are currently working on *Creator* and *Blade and Barrel* – aren't revealing anything until E3. We spoke to the company's head honcho Paul Hibbard, who'd say nothing but: "*Creator* is still in development and looking stunning." *Blade and Barrel*, meanwhile, is still wrapped in secrecy.

Maxis, on the other hand, have been all too keen to talk about their first N64 title, *SimCopter*. The PC version of the game received mixed reviews on its appearance earlier in the year, but the Japanese developers promise the 64-bit version will be veritably rejigged with 30 new pre-built cities.

New shots of Hudson's *Dual Heroes* appeared in the Japanese press this month. The game is shaping up to be a welcome chum for the exciting *Bomberman 64*.

Whilst Capcom US were busy quashing rumours of a potential *Resident Evil 64* or any N64 involvement whatsoever, Capcom Japan's Yoshiki Okamoto was saying: "We're researching the possibility of putting *Resident Evil* on a 128 megabit cart." Capcom US responded by saying they were "quite sure" nothing had been confirmed either way.

As with all things, E3 will reveal more. 

ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest information on every Nintendo 64 game currently in development world-wide, updated monthly.

	Game name	Publisher	Type	Country
July				
1	Robotech: Crystal Dreams	Gametek	SHT	US
15	ClayFighter 63 1/3	Interplay	FGT	US
18	Multi-Racing Championship	Imagineer	RAC	JPN
late	Blast Corps	Nintendo	SHT	UK
	ISS64	Konami	SPT	US
	Morita Shogi 64	Seta	TAB	JPN
	Rev Limit	Seta	RAC	JPN
	Sonic Wings Assault	Video System	SHT	JPN
August				
1	Mah Jong Diary Classic	Imagineer	TAB	JPN
7	Ganbare Goemon 5	Konami	RPG	JPN
	GoldenEye 007	Nintendo	ACT	JPN
	Human Grand Prix	Human	RAC	US
	Star Fox 64	Nintendo	SHT	UK
September				
23	Lamborghini 64	Titus	RAC	US
	Aero Gauge	ASCII	RAC	JPN
	ED	Ubi Soft	–	US
	Mission: Impossible	Ocean	ACT	US/UK/JPN
	Robotron X	Williams	SHT	US
October				
	Multi-Racing Championship	Ocean	RAC	US/UK
November				
21	Superman 64	Titus	ACT	US
	Chameleon Twist	JSS	ACT	JPN
	Final Doom 2	GT	SHT	US
	Joust X	Midway	SHT	US
	NFL Quarterback Club '98	Acclaim	SPT	US
December				
	Biofreaks	Midway	–	US
	Hyper Olympics	Konami	SPT	JPN
1997				
sum	3D Fighting*	Imagineer	FGT	JPN
sum	Baku Bomberman	Hudson	ACT	JPN
sum	Flying Dragon Fist Twin	Culture Brain	–	FGT
sum	Holy Magic Century Eltale	Imagineer	RPG	JPN
sum	J-League 11 Beat 1997	Hudson	SPT	JPN
sum	Reason	Imagineer	–	JPN
aut	J League Dynamite Soccer	Imagineer	SPT	JPN
aut	Sim City 2000	Imagineer	SLG	JPN
aut	VR Pro Wrestling	Asmik	FGT	JPN
late	Duke Nukem 3D	GT	SHT	US
	Attack!	Midway	–	US
	Blade & Barrel	Kemco	SHT	JPN
	Body Harvest	Nintendo	SHT	US
	Dead Ahead	Optical	–	JPN
	Dual Heroes	Hudson	FGT	JPN
	Extreme G	Acclaim	–	US
	F Thomas 'Big Hurt' Baseball	Acclaim	SPT	US
	Final Round 64	Konami	SPT	JPN
	Flight Simulator*	Video System	SHT	JPN
	Golf	Nintendo	SPT	JPN
	Human Wrestling	Human	SPT	JPN
	Ikazuchi no Goto Ku	Seta	TAB	JPN
	Jeopardy	Gametek	PUZ	US
	Ken Griffey Jr Baseball	Nintendo	SPT	US
	Lamborghini 64	Titus	RAC	US/UK
	Legend of Zelda 64	Nintendo	RPG	JPN/US/UK
	Loderunner 64	Bandai	ACT	JPN
	Mace: The Dark Age	Atari	FGT	US
	MK Mythologies: Sub Zero	Midway	FGT	US
	Namco Baseball	Namco	SPT	JPN
	Pachinko World 64	Shoei	ETC	JPN
	Pebble Beach Golf Links	T&E	SPT	JPN
	Professional Mah Jong	Athena	TAB	JPN
	Rebel Moon Rising	Midway	–	US/UK
	Saikyo Habu Shogi	Seta TAB		JPN
	San Francisco Rush	Midway	RAC	US
	Super Real Island	Seta –		JPN
	Super Robot Spirits	Banpresto	–	JPN
	Tetrishere	H20 PUZ		US
	Tokon Road	Hudson	SPT	JPN
	Top Gear Rally	Kemco	RAC	JPN
	Ultimate Racer	Acclaim	RAC	US
	Ultra Combat	GT –		US
	Wet Corpse	Vic Tokai	–	JPN
	Wheel of Fortune	Gametek	PUZ	US
	Wild Choppers	Seta SHT		JPN
	World Championship Wrestling	THQ	SPT	US
	XSW-1	Video Sys	–	JPN
	Yoshi's Island 64	Nintendo	ACT	JPN
	3-D Shooting*	Video Sys	–	JPN
	64 Ozumo	Bottom Up	SPT	JPN
1998				
early	Centipede X	Midway	SHT	US
spr.	Jungle Emperor Leo	Nintendo	–	JPN
	Earthworm Jim 3	Interplay	ACT	US
	Jurassic Park 2	Dreamworks–		US
	Mario Paint 64	Nintendo	ETC	JAP
	Pocket Monster 64	Nintendo	ETC	JAP
	Quest for Camelot	Titus–		US
	Sim City 64	Nintendo	SLG	JAP
	Sim Copter	Maxis	SIM	US
	Super Mario RPG 64	Nintendo	RPG	JAP
	Ultra Donkey Kong	Nintendo	ACT	JAP
No release date yet				
	Battle Dancers	Konami	FGT	JPN/US/UK
	Buggy Boogie	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
	Cavalry Battle 3000	JSS	RAC	JPN
	Creator	Nintendo	TAB	JPN
	Cu-On-Pa	T&E Soft	PUZ	JPN
	Daikatana	Ion Storm	SHT	US
	Dracula 3D (Castlevania 64)	Konami	ACT	JPN/US/UK
	F-Zero 64	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
	Freak Boy	Virgin	ACT	US
	Jack and the Beanstalk	Nintendo	–	JPN
	Kindaichi's Accident File	Hudson	–	JPN
	Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
	Mother 3	Nintendo	RPG	JPN
	NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	SPT	US
	New Japan Pro Wrestling	Hudson	SPT	JPN
	Power League 64	Hudson	SPT	JPN
	Quake 64	GT	SHT	US/UK
	Silicon Valley	BMG	ACT	US/UK
	Super Mario RPG 2	Nintendo	RPG	JPN
	Tonic Trouble	Ubi Soft	–	US
	Turrican 64	Factor 5	SHT	US
	Ultra Descent	Interplay	SHT	US/UK
	VR Baseball	Interplay	SPT	US
	VR Golf	Interplay	SPT	US

** working title*

KEY

ACT	ACTION	RPG	ROLE-PLAYING GAME	SHT	SHOOT-'EM-UP
FGT	FIGHTING GAME	SPT	SPORT	SIM	SIMULATION
SLG	STRATEGY	TAB	BOARD GAME	RAC	RACING
				ETC	MISCELLANEOUS

TOP 5 IN THE UK
Source: ChartTrack

1. SUPER MARIO 64
2. WAVE RACE 64
3. SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE
4. TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER
5. FIFA 64

TOP 5 IN JAPAN
Source: Famitsu + Dengeki Nintendo 64

1. STARFOX 64
2. MARIO KART 64
3. DORAEMON
4. POWER PRO BASEBALL 4
5. HUMAN GRAND PRIX

TOP 5 IN THE USA
Source: Electronics Boutique US

1. WAR GODS
2. MARIO KART 64
3. TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER
4. WAVE RACE 64
5. SUPER MARIO 64

TOP 5 IMPORTS
Source: Project K

1. STAR FOX 64
2. BLAST CORPS
3. MARIO KART 64
4. WAVE RACE 64
5. TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER

N64 MAGAZINE

Eager Waiting

Which new Nintendo 64 games are we most looking forward to?

1 → **The Legend of Zelda 64** — Nintendo, Release TBA

2 → **Go Go!! Troublemakers** — Enix/Treasure, June 27th in Japan

3 → **Super Mario RPG 2** — Nintendo, Release TBA
Super Mario RPG (SNES) shown

4 → **Castlevania 64** — Konami, Release TBA

5 ↑ **Mother 3** — Nintendo, Release TBA

6 ↓ **Ganbare Goemon 5** — Konami, Release TBA

7 ↑ **F-Zero 64** — Nintendo, Release TBA
F-Zero (SNES) shown

8 ↓ **Yoshi's Island 64** — Nintendo, Late summer

9 NEW! **Holy Magic Century** — Imagineer, Autumn

10 ↓ **Baku Bomberman** — Hudson Soft, Summer





Monthly report from inside the home of Nintendo 64. By Game Japan/Recca-sha Corp. (www.rcp.co.jp/recca/)

Turok in Japan

***Doom*-type games are traditionally frowned-upon in Japan. How will *Turok* get on?**

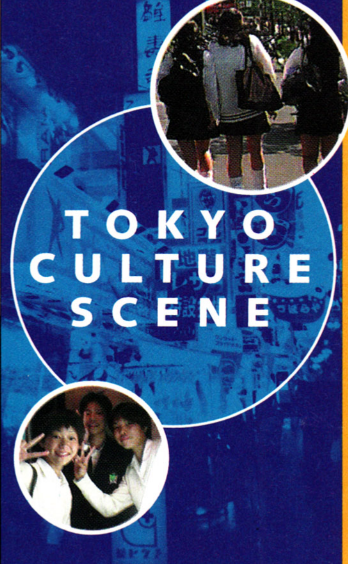
On the 30th of May, *Turok Dinosaur Hunter* was introduced to the Japanese market. As you'll know, it's a 3D shooting game of the *Doom* variety. The Japanese market awaits this new entry with reservation.

So far in Japan, this kind of game has never become popular, with *Doom* a prominent example. On the other hand, RPGs, which are popular in Japan, don't tend to be so successful in the US or Europe. And early indications are that *Turok* and Japanese taste don't make a good match.

Even so, we hope *Turok's* distributors will put a strong marketing effort behind this game, despite the odds. Not much improvement has been seen in the slow sales of Nintendo 64s in Japan, even since the release of *Starfox 64*. Sony's PlayStation console is still in the lead.

On the subject of 'foreign' software, there are strong rumours that the American-made PC game *Diablo* will be converted for N64 and be available in Japan. Although this information hasn't been confirmed, *Diablo* would be welcomed enthusiastically, since it's an equivalent to *Torneco* (a *Dragon Quest* spin-off). PC *Diablo* has been gaining in popularity in Japan and recently entered the PC games Top 10 here.





Read 'Kogayaru' magazines to catch up with Japanese street culture!

High school girls, especially the playful urban high school girls dubbed 'Kogyaru', are the deciding factor as far as trendy Japanese culture is concerned.

They dye their ebony hair in brown, tan their skin at artificial suntan salons, and embellish their ankles with 'loosened' long socks. They're indistinguishable from one another, happy to be in their uniforms. That way, they generate an epicentre of fashion. The humongous success of Tamagocchi was triggered by their word of mouth. And Puri-Kura (originally developed by Sega, with the registered name 'Print Club' – see page 66 for more details) they jumped at, and made it a hit. Whether a new product becomes a hit, or even a social phenomenon, depends entirely on them.

Will Nintendo flex its muscles?

Shadows of the Empire has just been released in Japan, but Nintendo don't seem fully behind it.

Star Wars: Special Edition hit American cinemas on the 31st of January, and long queues formed in New York and Los Angeles. Then it arrived in Japan on the 31st of May. On the 14th of June, two weeks after the film's release in Japan, an N64 game, _Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire,_ was released by Nintendo.

In the past, similar software on the PlayStation – *Star Wars: Dark Forces* and *Star Wars: Rebel Assault II* – seized a limited number of fans in Japan, despite the games' popularity in the US.

Will the N64 disprove the rule that Star Wars games aren't for Japan? Nintendo's promotional strategies would tend to suggest otherwise. TV advertisements have just started. We asked Nintendo's PR department what promotions they were planning. "For one to two weeks after the film release we're putting our advertisements on cinema screens," they told us. "And that's about it." Is this an indication of their confidence? The answer will be known by the end of June.

Naturally, the publishing industry has reacted to this 'Kogyaru factor'. Special-interest magazines like Egg and Cawaii, targeting kogyaru, have been published one after another, and have proven extremely popular. And their publishers have found that by including Kogyaru's pictures, and focusing on their interests, they're attracting male readership using Kogyaru as bait.

Even established girl's fashion magazines like *Seventeen* and *Fine* are emphasising information for Kogyaru. Reading Kogyaru magazines is now the fastest way to get hold of front-line information on Japanese street culture.



NINTENDO

SHORT SHORT

Multi-Racing Glowing Game Boy

Painted with phosphorescent paint, the Glowing Game Boy lights up in the darkness. Just ten minutes' exposure to sunshine will enable it to glow for eight hours. This new product is actually a promotional item for Imagineer's N64 game *Multi-Racing Championship*, which hits the Japanese market on the 18th of July. Only 2,000 are being produced, and they aren't for sale. The only way to get one is to apply to Imagineer in Japan. The sales campaign seems likely to be a great success, although it's not yet known whether something similar is planned for the game's European debut.



Tamagotchi on Game Boy is accompanied by a 'caring guide'

The portable pet-caring game, Tamagotchi, is extremely popular among Japanese high school girls. And, at long last, its Game Boy version, *Tamagotchi: Find it on Game*, has become available (Bandai released in on the 27th of June). So in July, a combined set including the game and a pink Game Boy will be launched. This set seems like a good buy, with the cartridge moulded in pink plastic and a 'caring guide' book thrown in too.





An Englishman in Japan

Ever wanted to know how it would feel to be lost in the streets of Tokyo? Or wanted to be able to speak Japanese? Then bid welcome to 'our man in Japan' Max Everingham...

Welcome to a new column designed to bring you a look at Japan from a 'gaijin's' perspective. I live and work in Tokyo, so every few days I'll be jogging down to Akihabara to see what tasty morsels of gaming fare I can retrieve for your reading pleasure.

Eh? Akihabara? Well, if technology is sexy, then Akihabara is the Kama Sutra. Think Tottenham Court Rd, then expand that thought to encompass a whole town rather than just the one street. This is where major new gaming products are hatched, nurtured and mercilessly flogged to the Japanese gaming public. More importantly, Akihabara is where that public flock to in order to try out the newest releases, shop for the latest bargains, or, if they're feeling especially energetic, attempt to track down the elusive electronic egg that you and I know as Tamagotchi.

I'll be bringing you news and pictures of these goings-on, including 'street shots' of some of the games you've yet to see in the UK being played by Joe Bloggs. Or, rather, Jouh Bloggsu. (A linguistic joke. Ahem. See below left.)







The ultimate in 'try before you buy' down in the streets of Akihabara.

LEARN JAPANESE

PART 1

Something else I'm going to be doing is introducing a bit of the foreign. So sign up now for lessons in essential Japanese for gamers. The first thing you need to know is that the Japanese language incorporates three different writing systems:

1. Kanji. Picture-based characters borrowed from the Chinese language.

2. Hiragana. Home-made character system.

3. Katakana. Phonetic writing system, used to transcribe imported words.

This last system is the one you're most likely to need if you visit Japan to indulge your gaming habit. Often the word is a direct import from the original language, converted into a kind of hybrid. So borrowed English is like English with a Japanese accent – hence my 'Jouh Bloggsu'.

Kicking off, let me refer you back to that first sentence:

– 'Gaijin', written **外人**, means 'foreigner' (literally 'outside person') and is a term applied to anyone who is not Japanese. This is Kanji.

– But the single most important word games fans need to know, the one word that will help you locate those shops with all those big boys' toys lurking inside, is **ゲーム**. This is Katakana, and it means 'Game'.



Some bacon with that, sir?

Yes, what is it about those eggs? If you ask me, I reckon it's the houses they have here.

I say 'houses', but they're flats, really, which are known as 'mansions' for some reason. The measure for room size is 'futon' – you know, a four-futon room, a six-futon room, and so on. (A futon, for all you non-Habitat-literate out there is the mattress, not the bed frame.) Your average room in these mansions is, say, six futons, which is enough room for a double bed, a wardrobe and a chest of drawers, but you're going to have to do your cat swinging outside.

You may be able to buy the latest electronic goods in Japan (toys), enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the modern world and so forth, but guess what? Pets are out. When you live in a shoe-box flat, Fido is not welcome. Casting aside considerations of noise, dirt and having to trog off down to the park of a morning, there just isn't the space to keep friends of the domesticated animal variety.

So what could be more obvious, then, than carrying a pixellated puppy around with you inside a tiny plastic egg? Makes sense to me.

Fear not if you're one of the thousands of dissatisfied customers whose attempts at securing their own egg pet have met with dismal failure. Be comforted by the fact that you could not get one if you were the Emperor of Japan himself. Be consoled that not even employees of Bandai (the company that make them) can get hold of them.

And be joyous that Tamagotchi is coming to a Game Boy near you soon. So you get a second bite at the, er, egg. Hurrah! The original Tama-gotchi, by the way, has just landed on the shores of America and has triggered the same massive queues we experienced here.

And no, that doesn't put the kybosh on my housing theory. No, really, it doesn't...

An elusive Tamagotchi is tracked down and netted for the the benefit of N64 Magazine.



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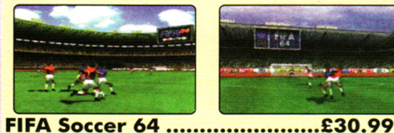
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UK NINTENDO 64 GAMES

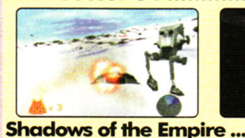








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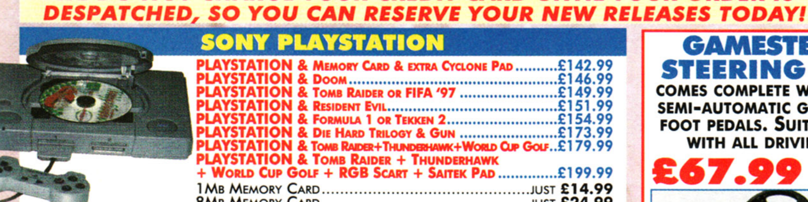
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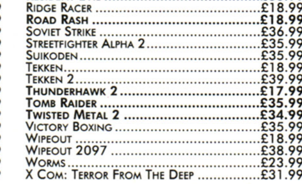
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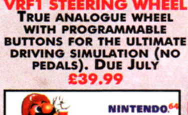
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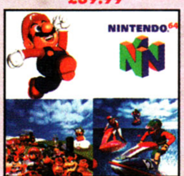


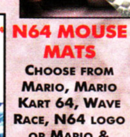
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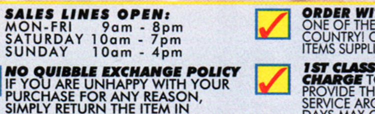
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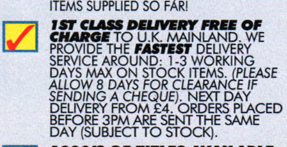
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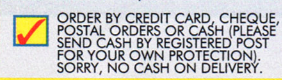
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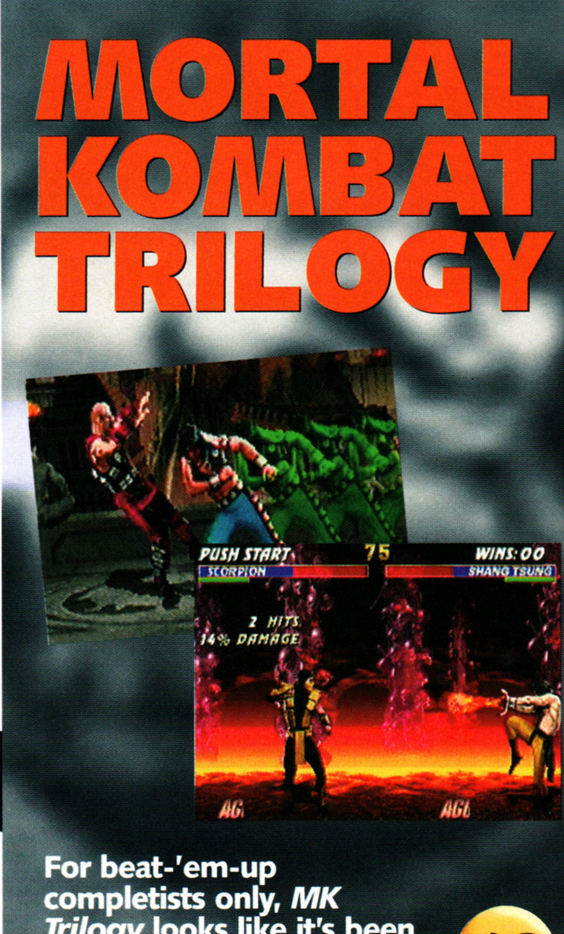
N64(7)


N64 MAGAZINE
ARENA
REVIEWED, RATED... AND COMPLETED!
MARIO KART 64
IMPORT
WAR GODS
Have Midway created a 3D beat-'em-up to make up for boring old *KI* and *MK*? Or not?

At last! We've been waiting for the UK version of *Mario Kart 64* with increasing impatience, and now it's here. And what a game! (Despite an iffy PAL conversion...)

30

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY



For beat-'em-up completists only, *MK Trilogy* looks like it's been dragged through a hedge backwards *and* forwards...

48

ARENA



50

Most N64 games tend to appear in Japan and America before they arrive in Europe. We track them down, play them thoroughly and review them immediately, to ensure our readers are fully informed at all times. We'll then also review the UK versions as soon as they become available.

PLAYING IMPORT GAMES

Japanese and American games can only be obtained through specialist importers, and won't work on UK N64s. To play them you'll either need a Japanese or American machine, or a modified UK N64. Or! a universal adaptor – we reviewed one of these special cart's in last month's issue, in Planet 64, if you're interested.

N64 GUIDE TO SCORING

We play all new Nintendo 64 games thoroughly and, if they're really great, we'll play them through to the end before arriving at a verdict. Our scores are considered carefully, taking into account the high cost of Nintendo games and the incredible capabilities of the N64. Here's how it works:

85% and above

N64 Magazine only awards the most superb games scores of 85% or above. We complete them to make sure they stay great all the way through and, if they do, give them our Star Game award. Games scoring this highly are great to play and show off the N64 fully.



84%-70%

Because such high standards have been set by the likes of *Super Mario 64* and *Mario Kart 64*, many otherwise excellent games struggle to match them. While they may still be well worth buying and playing, **N64** scores them strictly.

69%-50%

An irksomely unsatisfying area of the scale, containing games that are merely competent. They'll be playable and moderately entertaining but no more, probably because their developers have failed to grasp what the N64 is all about.

49%-20%

Let scores of less than 50% be a warning to you. These games really are no fun, and do our N64s a disservice.

19%-0%

We hope never to have to explore this scoring extreme, but will exercise it fearlessly if necessary.

THOSE CATEGORIES EXPLAINED

The N64 can produce graphics undreamt of before its arrival, and our 'Visuals' category takes this into account.



Has it got good noises in? And is the music good? Or just annoying? These things matter, they really do.



How well does the game make use of the N64's amazing hardware? A *Mario*-beater? Or just a PlayStation port?



It may look great, and sound brilliant, but will you finish it in five minutes and never want to play it again?



And the big mark at the end is essentially a measure of how much fun you're likely to get out of the game.



It's here! *Mario Kart 64's* UK release has been more eagerly awaited than the relief of Mafeking. Read this, then scoot out and buy it...

Mario Kart 64		
NINTENDO		
Out now	96M	1-4
	Controller Pak back-up	On-cartridge back-up
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MARIO KART


Swerve around a speeding express train with inches to spare!
Negotiate a flock of huge penguins!
Weave through the rush-hour traffic!
Avoid a giant dinosaur egg!
Bump down a red-carpeted staircase!
Pop your pals' balloons!
64
GO! GO!

MARIO KART 64
HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER

There are four different ways of playing *Mario Kart*, each allowing different numbers of players to compete. It's potentially confusing, but – here, look – we've sorted it all out.

Grand Prix mode — 1 or 2 players





This is the guts of *Mario Kart 64*, where all eight characters compete in a series of races for gold, silver and bronze cups.

How it works

You (and a pal if you like) choose a character and take on seven (or six) CPU-controlled karts in a series of three-lap races. The game's divided into four cups, each of four circuits, and you can tackle the cups in any order you like. To progress from race to race within a cup you need to come fourth or better, and at the end of the cup you're awarded gold, silver, bronze or nothing at all according to a Formula-1-style points system. You can play Grand Prix mode using 50cc, 100cc or 150cc karts, with the speed and CPU skill varying accordingly.

What it's like

Highly entertaining. You'll need a combination of driving technique and power-up skills to win, although even if you're a bit useless the game compensates to make sure you're always in amongst the action. The CPU intelligence is a bit 'obvious', so you'll frequently get cross with the computer karts. But the main snag is that it's too easy – you can finish all the cups on 150cc mode in a couple of days, especially if you co-operate with a chum.



Starts are exciting, with everyone bumping into one other and skidding.

Versus mode — 2, 3 or 4 players





If you like playing games against your pals, you'll absolutely adore Versus mode.



'Toad's Turnpike' (sigh) is a great four-player circuit – especially in Reverse mode.

How it works

The CPU karts disappear (it'd be asking a bit much for even an N64 to heave all them around four times over on the screen) and it's just you and however many chums you've provoked into challenging you. To compensate for the lack of opponents, wheeled yellow bombs zig-zag about the track. You'll explode if you hit them, natch. Oh, and you can pick any course you like rather than having to play through cups in order.

What it's like

With four-players, *Mario Kart* is just about the most fun it's possible to have in the world. Tyres squeal, wheels clash against wheels, Red Shells streak towards their targets, karts spin out and plunge into lakes, tempers fray and Controllers are thrown to the floor. (Particularly by James.) The screen update is a little slower with two, three or four windows on the screen, and a few graphical details are missed out, but this doesn't lessen the fun at all.

Battle mode

2, 3 or 4 players





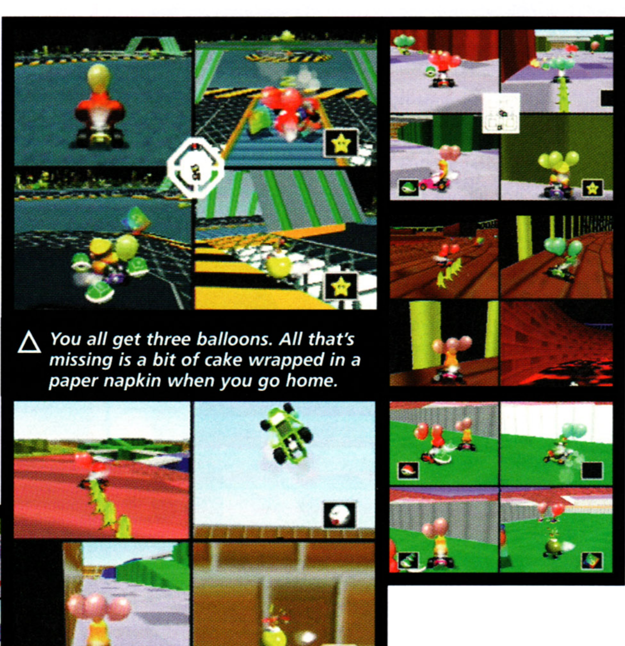
In *Super Mario Kart* on the Super Nintendo, Battle Mode was the unexpected icing on the cake – an intense two-player fight for supremacy. Now it's got new, 3D arenas and caters for up to four players.

How it works

Each player begins with three balloons attached to his kart. He loses a balloon each time he runs over a Banana, collides with a Shell or a Super-Star-equipped kart, or tumbles out of the arena, and goes out when he loses all three balloons. The last remaining player wins. Players who go out turn into wheeled bombs with one last chance to get their revenge on surviving players.

What it's like

Not all that great, by our reckoning. With the greater range of power-ups and multi-levelled arenas it's lost the simple charm of the *Super Mario Kart* version, and the bigger arenas mean too much time is spent driving around without seeing anyone. But it's still fun, and is a nice bonus to have in addition to all *Mario Kart 64's* other goodies.



You all get three balloons. All that's missing is a bit of cake wrapped in a paper napkin when you go home.

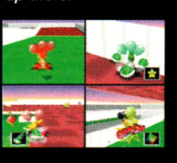




ARENAS



Big Donut
Their spelling, not ours. A large, banked circle with a hole in the middle. Battles tend to involve driving round in circles a lot.



Block Fort
More interesting than its name suggests. There are four 'forts' linked by high-up gangways, although you can't shoot people from up there.



Double Deck
A confusing multi-level arena where you can drive around for hours without seeing anyone.



Skyscraper
A great-looking one, this – you fight on top of a tall building, and fall for miles if you miss your footing. This tends to happen rather a lot, though.

Time Trial mode

1 player

If you're playing *Mario Kart 64* on your own, Time Trial mode is where you'll have the most long-term fun. In fact, we've been playing *MK64* on import for six months and we're still trying to improve our times on an almost daily basis.

The idea

Choose a character and one of the 16 tracks, and then do three laps as quickly as possible. Afterwards you're given a breakdown of your lap times and an overall time. There are no power-ups or other karts to get in the way, but you're given three Mushrooms to use as you see fit.

What it's like

Excellent. This is driving in its purest form. What seems like a pretty nifty time one day can become laughably slow the next as you master a new driving technique or short cut, and you can compete against the times of other players around the world (or, er, around Europe, given the PAL version's timing difference). A great way to play is to take it in turns with a friend, passing over the Controller as you manage to beat your opponent's latest time in a gentlemanly fashion.



A mastery of powersliding is vital.

GHOSTS!

After driving a Time Trial race without crashing, attempt the same course without changing character and you'll be able to race against a 'ghost' karter – you on your previous attempt. You can save this ghost to a Controller Pak, too, if you've got one. Plus! Crack certain times on three of the circuits and you can race against CPU controlled ghosts. The times you'll need to liberate the CPU ghosts on the UK version are roundabout the following:



Luigi Raceway:
02'10"00-ish
Mario Raceway:
01'47"00
Royal Raceway:
03'15"00-ish



GO! GO!



EIGHT OF A KIND

The original *Super Mario Kart* line-up are all back for the sequel, and they're much more evenly matched this time. Oh. Er, except Koopa Trooper – he's been replaced by Wario.

Yoshi, Princess Daisy and Toad

These characters comprise the 'light' group, and their clingy cornering and speedy acceleration out of bends make them ideal for Time Trial mode. They're less suited to Grand Prix racing, however, where they tend to get barged about by the heavier characters. Yoshi and Toad are the favoured pair here at **N64** Magazine – we've got all our best lap times with them – with Princess Daisy ("I'd like to be thought of as the Queen of Karts") hardly getting picked at all.



Mario and Luigi

The Mario brothers are the middle ranking karters – not particularly heavy or difficult to handle, but not particularly fast or manoeuvrable either. They're probably the best choices for *Mario Kart* newcomers, but don't tend to get picked much by proficient players.



KART CUSTOMISING

When you're playing *Mario Kart 64* in Grand Prix mode, power-ups play a vital part – occasionally even more vital than driving skills. And, while item appearance may seem random, skilled players will be able to detect patterns and turn seemingly useless power-ups to their advantage. The Z trigger controls all power-up operations, although it can be employed in a number of ways.



Banana
Can be dropped after blind corners and before important jumps to send opponents into a spin, or can be launched to the front by holding the joystick forwards as Z is pressed.



Banana Bunch
Pressing Z causes these to form a string behind you, which will knock out anyone who crashes into you. If there's no-one behind you, pressing Z repeatedly will scatter them on the track.



Green Shell
These can be launched forwards by pressing Z, although pull back on the stick as you press and the shell will be shot behind you. When you launch a green shell, it circles once around your kart before whizzing off meaning anyone driving near you will be hit.



Red Shell
Works like a green shell. But! Homes in on whoever's ahead of you. Red shells work better on some circuits than others, tending to crash into the sides of walled ones. They're near-useless on Toad's Turnpike, for example.



Triple Shells
Green and red shells can occasionally be picked up in groups of three. Pressing Z sets them rotating about your kart, where they'll form a handy shield against attack. Then, pressing Z three more times will launch them one at a time.



Spiny Shell
The ultimate offensive power-up, this speeds off in pursuit of the race leader emitting a fearsome noise. It'll never crash, always finding its target, and will also take out anyone who gets in its way.



Mushrooms
Mushrooms come either as Single, Triple or timed Super Mushrooms that can be used as often as you want over a limited period. They're best used for starting you off quickly after a crash or a slow corner. They're also good for taking short cuts.



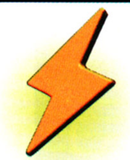
Fake Item
This resembles a power-up, but, once dropped, will clobber anyone who tries to pick it up. Best dropped in amongst groups of real power-ups. (Treat lone power-ups with suspicion.) Identifiable on close inspection by its upside-down question mark.

Donkey Kong, Wario and Bowser

Evil they may be, but, along with DK, Wario and Bowser are the fastest karters on the track. They take a while to get up to speed (out of slow corners, for example, or after you've crashed), but once they're there there's no stopping them. Their problem is, being a bit chubby they don't take corners too well, and they'll slow down badly if they put a wheel on the grass. But their weight combined with their extreme evilness means they'll force their way past lighter drivers with aplomb – try using a turbo start (by pressing A as the last light comes on) and watch them smash their way through to the front of the grid.



Power-up tips



Thunder Bolt
A great power-up. Use it and everyone on the track will go temporarily out of control and then shrink for a few seconds. While they're shrunken they can be squashed satisfyingly beneath the wheels of your kart.



Super Star
For a few blessed seconds this will make you invincible and make your kart go faster and handle better. Anyone you crash into while Starred-up will suffer terribly.



Boo
Makes you invincible and invisible, and grabs any power-up your nearest opponent is carrying.

- *After you run over an item it'll take a few seconds before your allotted power-up is selected. You can speed up this process by pressing Z.*
- *A frequent complaint is: "Now I'm in first place, all I seem to get is rubbish Green Shells and Bananas." Well, tough. That's the way Mario Kart 64 works. If you're driving in the first couple of places you will, indeed, just tend to be given single Shells and Bananas. If you're in the middle ranks you'll tend to get triple Shells and Mushrooms. And if you're at the back you'll get all the tasty Thunder Bolts and Spiny Shells. This is Mario Kart 64's way of evening things out and making sure races are closely run. And besides…*
- *…Shells and Bananas can be held behind your kart by pressing and holding Z. Here they'll act as a shield against attack, and can be used to 'rub out' anyone on your tail. This is why they tend to be given to players who're leading the field – they're great for holding onto that first place.*

KART TECHNIQUE

Mario Kart 64's controls are incredibly subtle, with all sorts of tricks and techniques to ferret out.



Z trigger This activates any power-ups you pick up. If you're packing three Shells, pressing Z once will put them into orbit around your kart, allowing you to pick up another power-up for use later. It's also possible to achieve this with single Shells and Bananas by pressing and *holding* Z. Shells held outside your kart act as a defensive shield against obstacles, weapons and other karts.

A nifty tip, if you're in a hurry for a power-up, is to press Z while the pictures are cycling through in the little box; you'll get whichever power-up you were going to get quicker. Hardly anyone spots this, so it's great for gaining the edge in frantic multi-player games – the Battle Mode especially.



R This either makes your kart do a jump, or controls 'drifting' (see below). Jumping, if you press R briefly, allows you to takes corners just a little bit tighter, and can get you over gaps in the track.

L Cycles between music on, quiet music and music off.

Analogue joystick Steers you left and right in gradual increments. Also reverses you if you pull back on it while holding down B. Hold it back while in mid-air to prevent your kart from bouncing when it hits the ground.



A Accelerator.

B Brake. And, in combination with the joystick, reverse.

A+B Press both A and B together while you're stationary and move the joystick left or right and you'll spin on the spot – handy if you find yourself stuck in a corner.

Right C Cycles between (1) a speedometer, (2) a map of the course showing with all the racers on it, and (3) a leadership map, running around the screen, with everyone's placings on it.



Bottom C Same as Z trigger.

Top C Switches between the standard camera and a zoomed-out view. The latter is preferable for Grand Prix mode, giving a better view of anyone who's on your tail.

Start Pauses the game.

DRIFT CORNERING

If you ever want to join the higher echelons of Mario Kart champions, it's vital that you master drift cornering. This is achieved by pressing and holding R at the same time as the accelerator as you go into a long bend. You'll find yourself sliding sideways around the corner, and the smoke from your tyres will form letters – first Vs, then Es. Then, as you gently waggle the stick to hold yourself on course, you'll find the smoke turning yellow and, eventually, red. Release R at this point and you'll get a handy boost out of the corner. There's more about drift cornering in the Mario Raceway masterclass on pages 46 and 47


GO! GO!

MARIO KART 64 COURSE GUIDE

MUSHROOM CUP

Luigi Raceway 717m

A simple loop of a circuit, set in a Formula-1-style arena littered with Luigi memorabilia. There are no sharp bends or nasty surprises, making it a suitably gentle introduction.

1 ● On laps two and three of a race, a Luigi hot-air balloon will appear before the first corner with a power-up dangling beneath it. The power-up's always a spiny blue shell. To get it, either hope you're in the right place at the right time, or wait on the shadow in the inside lane and then hop up when the power-up floats within range.



2 ● If you get a Super Star or Triple Mushroom, there's a lot to be said for zooming across the sand and driving around this first long bend on the grass.



3 ● A short tunnel provides a welcome distraction.

4 ● With no real opportunities for cheating, the best way to succeed on Luigi Raceway is to master drift cornering (see Kart Technique box and also the Mario Circuit masterclass). On both the long bends it's possible to get three or four mini-turbos this way, along with a couple on the bends in the tunnel. It's good to get one to boost you up the hill out of the tunnel, or you'll lose loads of speed.

Moo Moo Farm 527m

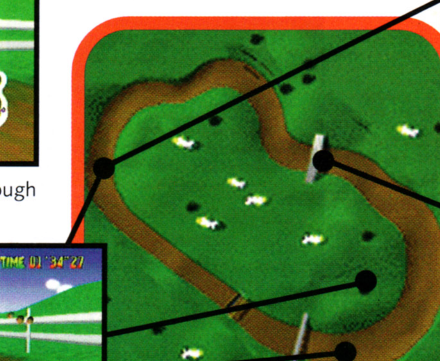
This second course is largely featureless, too, the only dangers being crashing into the bridge supports and colliding with the annoying moles. But it's good for getting aquainted with the art of driving over bumpy ground, and the cows peering over the fences are sweet.



1 ● The cows seem friendly, although they don't move much.

2 ● Moles are a blessed nuisance, popping out of their holes and sending you flying. You can plough straight through them if you've got a Super Star or a Boo, though.

3 ● Just to the left of the moles is a good spot for Banana deployment, to catch out mole-evading opponents.







4 ● It would be lovely to believe there's a shortcut leading over these two bridges. The fence seems entirely impervious, however.

TIME TRIAL N64 times to beat:
Luigi Raceway **2'06"75** Koopa Trooper Beach **1'55"34**

Koopa Trooper Beach 691m

A smashing desert island course with waves lapping gently up the beach, hazardous crabs, seagulls circling gracefully in the sky above, an attractive waterfall, multiple routes and a couple of nifty short cuts.



1 ● There's a brilliant shortcut through this tunnel, coming out through a waterfall. And, although it's easiest to make the jump if you've got a Super Star or a Mushroom, you don't actually need one – just press jump as you get to the end of the ramp. The tunnel's an ideal spot for banana-laying.



2 ● The power-up atop this grassy mound is always a Spiny Shell. You'll need a mushroom to make the jump, though.



3 ● If you're Time Trialling, use your Turbo to slice through the water on this last bend (having not used it on the tunnel short cut).

4 ● A sand bank provides a shortcut across this bay. It's littered with crabs, unfortunately, but worth risking nonetheless.

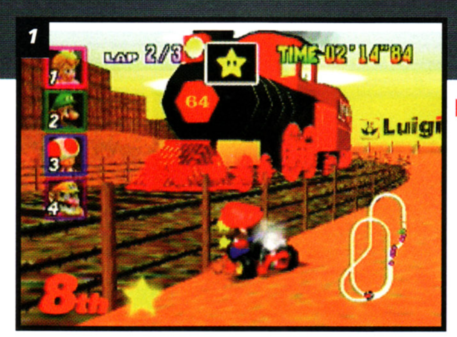


5 ● A clump of palm trees here tends to send beginners flying.



Kalimari Desert 753m

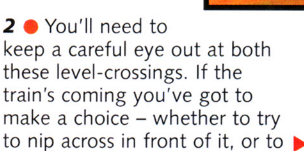
The excitement in the final track is provided by a train which runs around a track that intersects the road in a couple of places. Stopping for the level crossings might be the one time you really need to slam on your go-kart's brakes.



1 ● The train's speed is such that if you need to stop for it at one level-crossing, you'll need to stop at the other one on the same lap as well.

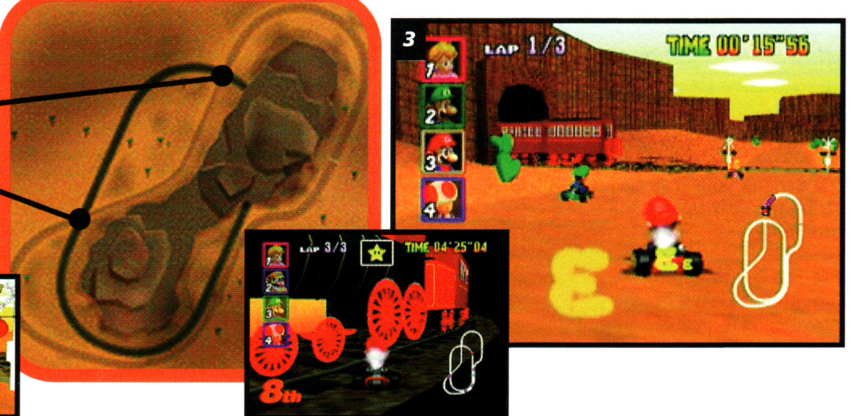






2 ● You'll need to keep a careful eye out at both these level-crossings. If the train's coming you've got to make a choice – whether to try to nip across in front of it, or to ▶ slam on the brakes and wait. Ideally, rather than stopping dead, you'll just slow, timing it so you arrive at the crossing just as the train's gone through. There's fun to be had nudging opponents onto the track. And, of course, a Super Star allows you to plough on regardless.

3 ● Once you've got the hang of drift cornering, it's worth trying to get as many mini-turbos as possible around the bends of Kalimari Desert. Otherwise, there's not much opportunity for skillful driving here, and it can become something of a power-up lottery in Grand Prix mode.



GO! GO! ▷

FLOWER CUP

Toad's Turnpike 1,036m

'Toad's Turnpike'? We have to admit to prefering 'Kinopio Highway', the authentic Japanese name. Still, this is one of Mario Kart's most original circuits, running along a busy motorway. This leads, inevitably, to much weaving between traffic and getting caught beneath wheels – a particularly fraught business for beginners. Once you've got the hang of it, though, this tends to become one of the game's less interesting courses, with power-ups the deciding factor. (Although Red Shells don't work too well here, except at close range.) Once you've got golds in everything and activated the reverse mode, however, things get more interesting. The lighter characters – Yoshi, Toad and Princess – tend to have the edge on Toad's Turnpike, with their greater affinity for swerving about the track.



1 ● The power-ups are all stashed in these roadside lay-bys, and are trickier to get at than normal. The ideal pick-up will see you swooping into the lay-by, dropping a banana at its mouth, and then picking up all four power-ups to ensure anyone on your tail misses out.



2 ● For extra speed, try to powerslide around as many of the bends as possible. Tricky, given the amount of traffic, but one of the few ways to gain an edge on this wiggle-less course.



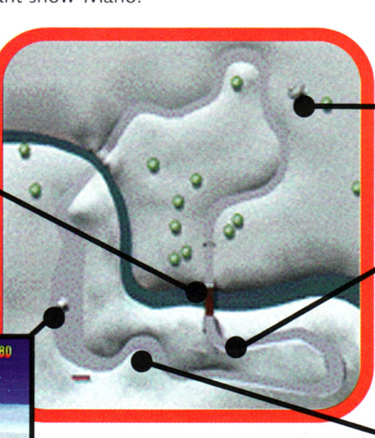
3 ● A 'turnpike', according to the **N64** Dictionary, is "U.S. a motorway for use of which a toll is charged". Tsk.

Frappe Snowland 734m

A fairly straightforward ice-based course, complicated only by so-called snowmen that in fact seem to have been carved from marble. There's plenty of potential for cutting across the snow banks beside the road if you've got mushrooms, and the numerous corners make powersliding a must if you're doing Time Trial laps.



1 ● Banana skins may be placed advantageously upon this bridge.



2 ● The key to getting through this crowd of snowmen is to pick a straight line through them as you approach, and then to stick to it. Trying to weave ▶ between them never works. There's a suitable clear line that runs to the left of the giant snow-Mario.

3 ● Let's hope this giant snow-Yoshi doesn't come to life, Raymond-Briggs-style.

4 ● Powerslide spectacularly around this long last corner.

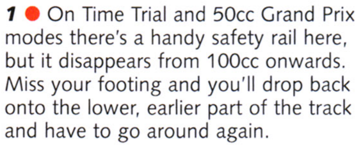


5 ● If you've got a Mushroom, zoom across here to save a second or two.

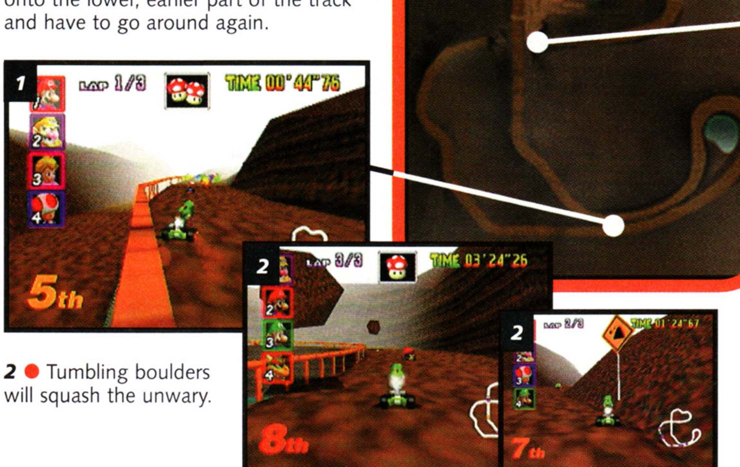
TIME TRIAL N64 times to beat:
Frappe Snowland 2'17"57 Mario Raceway 1'32"88

Choco Mountain 687m

Not a course with many fans in the N64 office, this one. The rocky sides of the track frequently stop you dead if you so much as brush them, and, well, it's all a bit brown.



1 ● On Time Trial and 50cc Grand Prix modes there's a handy safety rail here, but it disappears from 100cc onwards. Miss your footing and you'll drop back onto the lower, earlier part of the track and have to go around again.



2 ● Tumbling boulders will squash the unwary.



3 ● There's a tiny tunnel, but that's about it variation-wise.



TURBO START!
You can get off to a speedier start by pressing and holding A at just the right time – roughly halfway between the second and third lights coming on. (Be careful if you're Toad, Princess or Yoshi, though – if you're at the back of the grid you'll tend to crash into any heavier characters in front and spin out.) In Time Trial mode it's possible to get an even faster start by pressing A just as the final light comes on. Turbo starts are also possible after Lakitu lifts you out of the water if you press A just before he releases you.

Mario Raceway 567m

The Circuit of Conquering Heroes. Mario Raceway has been designed to perfection, incorporating finely judged corners and shortcuts that are almost impossible – but not quite. There's everything here: a powersliding curve, a double-apex bend, a tricky hairpin, a cross-country detour and the most incredible wall-hopping shortcut. For this reason, Mario Raceway is the circuit Mario Kart 64 players are judged on, so it's worth spending days honing your Time Trial time on it.

1 ● For details of this shortcut, and the perfect method for tackling the rest of Mario Raceway, study the Mario Circuit masterclass on pages 46 and 47.

2 ● This pipe will be familiar to fans of Mario's platform adventures.

3 ● A giant Mario hat shelters the crowd.



4 ● Even when you've got to grips with powersliding, the hairpin bend can send you flying off onto the grass. If you start running into trouble, hop a lot.





5 ● If you've got a Super Star or a Mushroom, speed across the grass here and the sand on the opposite side.

GO! GO!

STAR CUP

Wario Stadium 1,591m

Wario's circuit fills every last inch of the stadium, and is consequently incredibly long. For this reason, races here can go on a bit. But there's huge potential for powersliding – on just about every corner, in fact – and an excellent jump from which, if you trigger a Thunder Bolt at just the right time, you can send the other players tumbling down to an earlier part of the track. Power-ups are vital here, and their wide spacing makes collecting them tricky.

1 ● Overhead TV screens illustrate the action.

2 ● There's a tough but valuable short cut just here. To make it, drive flat-out along the exact top of the first hump at right-angles to the wall. Just as you hit the wall, press jump and, about one time out of twenty, you'll fly clean over the wall. (A Mushroom can help here.) You'll chop off a huge chunk of the course. Because of its unreliability, however, this short cut's only really any good on the first lap of a Time Trial attempt – you'll simply make a fool of yourself in Grand Prix mode. Legend speaks, incidentally, of how it's possible to achieve ▶ similar short cuts elsewhere on the track, including one spot just a little way along from this one that takes you back over the wall to just before the finish line, for a sub-ten-second lap time. We can't get this to work, however.



3 ● It might all look a bit brown, but Wario Stadium's driving surface is one of the best in the game – wide, skiddy and with some huge lumpy bumpy bits.

4 ● There are some massive, stomach-churning humps that're great fun to fly over.



5 ● For such a long course, finishes tend to be surprising close here. That's the power-ups for you.

Sherbert Land 756m

A track on which true experts will triumph, this one – power-ups don't come into it. The surface is slippery, and runs around the edge of an ice-cold lake into which one can all-too-easily plunge. Trickier than that, however, is a cave full of gyrating penguins. Nice!



1 ● Fall into the water and you'll have frozen into a block of ice by the time Lakitu pulls you out.



2 ● Scatter Bananas and things down the narrow entrance to the cave.

3 ● This cave is full of penguins, leading to much oath-muttering from unprepared players. Learn how the penguins move, circling the pillars in pairs, and you'll be able to ▶ negotiate them without too much trouble. It's quicker, though harder, to take the inside line through the left-hand side of the cave.



4 ● Hop over the water on these tight corners to save time.



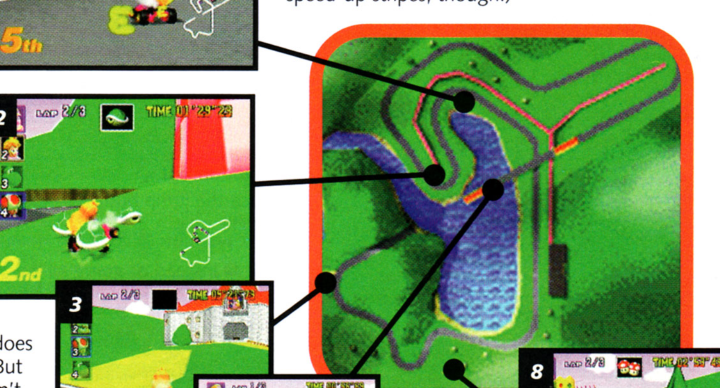
5 ● Penguins slide about the ice on their tummies. Study their movements closely so you can predict whether it's better to go between or around them.



TIME TRIAL N64 time to beat:
Royal Raceway 3'07"46 Bowser's Castle 2'36"53

Royal Raceway 1,025m

Princess Daisy's is a great circuit, up with Mario Raceway as a test of driving excellence. There are loads of powerslideroundable corners, an incredible jump, and a really tricky wiggly bit at the end. It's even possible to visit the Princess's castle, as featured in Super Mario 64.



1 ● Powerslide around these first two bends.

2 ● Hop across the grass on this hairpin, saving a vital scrap of time.

3 ● Turn off to the right here and you can explore the grounds of the Princess's castle, appearing just as it does in *Super Mario 64*. But – sadly no – you can't go inside.

4 ● If you pick up a Thunder Bolt, save it till there are loads of people approaching this jump. ▶ Trigger it and they'll all plunge into the water below. (It won't work when they're on the speed-up stripes, though.)



5 ● As you land, keep the stick pulled back and you won't bounce.

6 ● Try steering sharp left and doing a jump as you come off the end of the ramp. You'll hurtle over the water and, probably, into it. (Obviously.) But! Judge it just right and it's sometimes possible to touch down on the right-hand bank of the lake. You'll tumble into the water again. But! With a bit of luck, Lakitu will pick you up and put you down on the track just next to where you fell in, chopping out a big lump of track. (We've got this to work roughly twice in two hundred attempts.)

7 ● The road wiggles trickily just here, causing particular problems for fat boys Kong, Wario and Bowser.

8 ● If you're on a Time Trial lap, use your Mushroom to zip across the grass here, cutting out the tricky bit.

Bowser's Castle 777m

If the graphics in Mario Kart 64 have been functional so far, rather than impressive, then all that changes on this course. You get to race around Bowser's castle, indoors and out, zooming past caged Thwomps, priceless paintings and ornamental plants, and it all looks absolutely stunning. Nearly all the bends are right-angle jobs, which can be tough, and the Thwomps are a blessed nuisance. A skill track, rather than a power-up one, and immensely satisfying when you get it right.

1 ● Powerslide in a graceful arc through the garden and into the castle.

2 ● More Thwomps appear on 100cc and 150cc modes. They thud up and down and zoom backwards and forwards. Crashing into one brings you to an undignified halt.

3 ● Powerslide around the corners through the castle.



4 ● We spent quite a while trying to free this caged Thwomp, but gave up in the end.

5 ● Bumping down the steps here is amusing.

6 ● Falling into the pesky lava beneath this bridge is all too easy, unfortunately.

7 ● Be sure to take this jump on the left- or right-hand side, rather than in the middle, or you'll get caught out by the lava beyond.



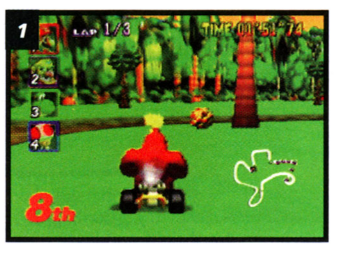
8 ● A banana skin dropped beside the wall on this spiral bit is a guaranteed winner.

GO! GO!

SPECIAL CUP

Donkey Kong's Jungle Parkway 893m

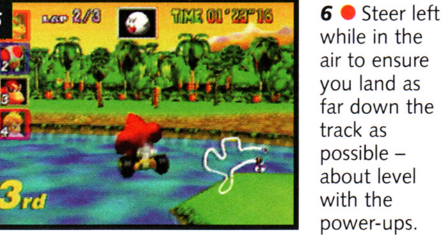
The graphics get better and better with this smashing jungle course. There's a full-sized paddle steamer cruising up and down the river, a breath-taking waterfall (best viewed during the credits sequence when you complete the cup) and a great ricketty bridge. There are a couple of unique touches, too, like a dark cave and some monkeys lurking in the trees.



1 ● Go off the track towards the trees and unseen monkeys will hurl coconuts at you. These can be helpful, occasionally knocking you back onto the track, but generally just hurt a bit.



5 ● Scatter bananas generously along the bridge



6 ● Steer left while in the air to ensure you land as far down the track as possible – about level with the power-ups. Upon landing, use the jump button to turn around to face the right way.

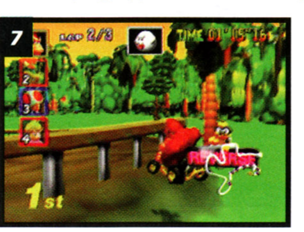
2 ● It's a hulking great paddle steamer, look.

3 ● Be sure to powerslide around all the corners.

4 ● An absolute must is to chop off as much of this hairpin as possible by hopping up the hill. As this short cut's just before the finish line, races against the computer can be easily won this way.



7 ● Instead of going all the way around the looping approach to the bridge, try turning right just before the bridge and hopping over the guard rail, landing just before the speed-up stripes. A bit erratic, this, but it saves many seconds.



Yoshi Valley 772m

Things start to get pretty tough now. Much of Yoshi's course runs along the tops of high ridges, with hardly any safety fences and a long fall to the ground. And, for the first time, you've got a choice of routes through a convoluted maze. The two shortest have dangerous Spinies scattered along them, while the others take ages.

1 ● Probably the safest route is to go right, then left, across the bridge, and then sharp left after the jump. You'll only meet a few Spinies this way, and they're easily avoided.





4 ● The shortest route, just, involves turning left as you go into the maze, then right, and then left again. There are two groups of Spinies, though, the first of which is practically impossible to avoid disaster with.

2 ● Courageous karters will want to try this shortcut. As the road kinks to the right, steer sharp left and hop at the edge. Keep steering left in the air and you'll hopefully land back on the track on the other side, chopping out a section of the hairpin.



3 ● The highlight of the course is this giant Yoshi egg, which rolls about among some power-ups and needs to be avoided astutely.



5 ● Remember that the road kinks to the right, here – you can't see it as you come over the hill.

Banshee Boardwalk 747m

Guaranteed to strike terror into the heart of any but the most experienced Karter, Banshee Boardwalk (Hyuudoro Lake suited us just fine) is constructed from rotting wood, and the guardrails have broken at the most inopportune points. There's a bat-filled haunted house, a giant fish and, of course, loads of translucent ghosts.

<None>1 ● Going to the left of this pillar and hopping over the hole in the floorboards saves a minute amount of time and sets you up better for the next right-hand bend.

2 ● The bats will slow you down if you hit them, but there's seemingly no way of avoiding them.

3 ● Ensure you powerslide around this bend.

4 ● Although there are ghosts and bats everywhere, the scariest part of the course is, curiously, this wiggly bit. To begin with it's virtually impossible to take at high speed, and even after weeks of practice the heavier characters will struggle to avoid plunging into the stagnant water below.

Rainbow Road 2,000m

And it was all going so well... Although it looks amazing, hovering in space and surrounded by neon Mario miscellany, Rainbow Road comes as something of an anti-climax. There are no tricky turns or jumps or anything, there are walls either side of the track so you'll never fall off, and, at 2,000m, it seems to go on forever. Success is simply a case of keeping the accelerator pressed firmly down, avoiding the Chomps that zoom towards you, and making the best use of the power-ups.

1 ● The best thing about Rainbow Road is this excellent short cut, which works best in Time Trial mode and invariably impresses onlookers. As you cross the finish line, use a mini-turbo, count to three and, as the wheels of your kart just start to leave the track on the downhill bit, steer violently 90° to the left and do a jump. You'll sail over the wall and plunge into blackness. As you fall, however, you'll notice you're heading for another section of track. With any luck you'll touch down neatly on it and be able to turn around and continue, having hewn off about a quarter of the track. Once you've got the hang of this trick, it's simplicity itself to pull it off on each of your three Time Trial laps.





2 ● Keep an eye out for chomps approaching in the distance, and watch how they zig-zag across the track so you can judge which side to pass them on.

3 ● All the karts are pretty evenly matched here, so to gain the edge you'll need to powerslide around every available corner.

4 ● Bananas come into their own here, as they're often impossible to spot against the garish road.

GO! GO!

BATTLE GAME
It's all about getting Red Shells and Super Stars. So grab power-ups, press Z as the selector box is cycling through to activate them as quickly as possible, and throw away anything that's no use immediately so you can pick up something that is.

BANANA SKIN IMMUNITY!
If you run over a Banana and your kart doesn't spin immediately but wobbles slightly first (generally if you the 'nana on a straight, rather than as you're steering around a bend), tap B as you're wobbling and your character will whistle and carry on unhindered.

Mario Kart 64 Top 5's

Top 5 Multi-Player Courses / Top 5 Time Trial Courses

	Top 5 Multi-Player Courses			Top 5 Time Trial Courses	
1	Koopa Trooper Beach	*The sun and sea make for cheerful holiday racing.*	*The circut of conquering heroes.*	Mario Raceway	1
2	Sherbert Land	*A real test of driving skill, this one, with more experienced karters always triumphing.*	*Tryto do the jump three times in a row without using Mushrooms.*	Koopa Trooper Beach	2
3	Bowser's Castle	*Another pro's course, although carefully-placed Banana's can reap rewards.*	*Much precise taking-of-the-racing-line is called for here.*	Royal Raceway	3
4	Donkey Kong's Jungle Parkway	*Loads of long, fast straights.*	*The trick is to see how many mini-turbos you can get on the two long bends.*	Lyigi Raceway	4
5	Royal Raceway	*The sequence of corners near the end weeds out the amateurs.*	*Lots of wiggly bits where it's possible to get Mini-turbos if you're really good.*	Frappe Snowland	5

Think about what you're actually getting when you buy an ordinary racing game. You get a car to drive. You get some computer-controlled cars to race against. And you get some attractive scenery to drive through. And that's it. *Ridge Racer, Sega Rally, Daytona* – good games, all of them, but essentially just a car, some other cars and some scenery.

Now consider *Mario Kart 64*.

You still get the car, the other cars and the scenery. But they're just the start of it. You also get infinitely subtle handling that means that, even after weeks of practice, you're still refining your powersliding technique to eke the last few miles per hour out of your kart. You get complex AI that provides each of the CPU-controlled karts with its own personality, so every time you play you'll have different rivals tussling with you for first place. You get a range of power-ups that, if employed intelligently, will scupper your opponenents – with hilarious consequences. You get courses that are all completely different from one another, with bumpy surfaces and interact-with-able hazzards like ramps, penguins, snowmen, multiple routes and a giant dinosaur egg. You get two-player Grand Prix mode. You get a two-, three- and four-player Versus mode. You get Time Trial mode, where expert players can compete against the best in the world for the fastest lap-times. And you get Battle Mode, where up to four players can zoom around arenas trying to pop each other's balloons.



Good news – with this Mushroom we'll be able to take the cave short cut effortlessly.

'2nd'? But we're clearly inches ahead of Toad as we head for a terrifyingly large picture of Princess Daisy. Maybe a Shell'll sort him out.

MIRROR MODE!
Get a gold on all four cups in 150cc mode and you'll activate a new Mirror Mode, in which all the tracks become mirror images of themselves.

It's all a bit overwhelming, so here – providing an exciting insight into the inner workings of the **N64** Magazine office – is what we've been up to since we got our hands on the Japanese version of *Mario Kart 64* late last year:

One-player Grand Prix racing!

In the beginning there was just me – it was a few days before the rest of the **N64** team turned up to join me in the new, hastily constructed **N64** office – so I began to tackle *Mario Kart* alone. And my aim, logically enough, was to get golds on all four cups in 150cc mode and activate the rumoured reverse mode.

And what fun I had. *Mario Kart 64's* racetracks have, for the most part, been superbly designed, and are great fun to drive around, each with new features to discover and different techniques to master. Thanks to the 'reactive' AI of the CPU karts you're always in the thick of the action, with power-ups flying and wheels colliding.

It didn't take long to polish off the 50 and 100cc modes, but even a couple of days later I was still struggling to get the four 150cc gold cups I needed…

Two-player Grand Prix racing!

As Christmas approached, and an icy wind began to howl through the poorly insulated **N64** office, my friend Jon (who wrote **N64** issue 2's Turok guide, full-story fans) popped in to visit. And I challenged him to a two-player game of *Mario Kart 64*.

The two-player split-screen mode works brilliantly in Grand Prix mode. The frame rate slows a little, but not so you notice after a while. And the big advantage is that you can work together to get cups. You can either both drive flat-out to keep the CPU players out of the points, or one player can drive in support of the other, hanging back to get Thunder Bolt power-ups and then timing their use to the other player's advantage.

It took a couple of evenings to polish off all the cups, and then a few more hours to win all the Reverse mode cups. Which doesn't seem very long, really.

Disillusion

Nintendo's efforts to do something different with the computer-controlled karts are commendable but also, sadly, *Mario Kart's* partial undoing. When you've been playing for a while, the way your N64 decides in which order the CPU karts are going to finish the cup before the first race has even started becomes all too transparent. It'll decide that Donkey Kong, for example, is going to do his best to finish first, and then in all four races of the cup he'll be right up there at the front, jockeying with you for first place, barging past you, throwing bananas at you, miraculously doubling his top speed to make sure he always catches up with you within seconds no matter how many shells, bananas and turbos you use, and no matter how many short cuts you take. If you drive perfectly, and use power-ups sensibly, it's still possible to win fair and square. But with the same thing happening in every race it gets terribly repetitive.

So Grand Prix racing became tiresome, especially when we'd got golds on everything. And, for a few days, I feared for *Mario Kart's* life.

Multi-player racing!

Then, a few days later, there was a timid knock at the door. "Enter," I commanded. And James, Tim and Wil bounded excitedly into the office.

Multi-player *Mario Kart* racing is endlessly entertaining. Real-life human opponents are far more fun to race against than Nintendo's CPU ones, thanks to all the power-up trickery and short cut mischief that *Mario Kart* allows, and the experience I'd already gained with the game allowed me to defeat James, Tim and Wil with ease over and over again. Hurrah!

It'll mean investing in three more

Ah, Bowser. We've got a present for you. Can you guess what it is?

The flaming Bowsers are good. But we don't like Princess Daisy much.

You know you've 'got it' when you can powerslide in the tunnel.

controllers, of course, and having three chums on hand, but multi-player *Mario Kart* truly is immense fun.

Battle Game disappointment

The arrival of my new pals also allowed me to try out the bit of *Mario Kart 64* I'd been looking forward to the most. *Super Mario Kart's* two-player Battle Game was the best thing about it, and back on *Super Play* magazine we used to spend far more time than we should've chasing each other around its little arenas, popping each other's balloons. Surely, four years on, *Mario Kart 64's* Battle Mode would simply be the best thing there'd ever been – even if they simply left it the same.

And yet... no. It seems a bit dull to us. They've made the arenas about ten times bigger, so even with four of you playing you hardly ever spot anyone to attack. And they've introduced falling-off-the-edge. So victory is generally secured by simply hiding in the corner and waiting for everyone else to either fall accidentally to their deaths or run boringly over banana skins. And the arenas are far too complicated for their own good – in *Super Mario Kart* we got the most fun out of the simplest arenas.

We really want to like it, but Nintendo have mucked this bit up badly. If Mr Yamauchi was here now I'd prod him in the stomach and tell him so. Actually, I wouldn't. He's frightening.

How does the UK version shape up?

With its brought-forward release date of 13th June, we've been able to get our hands on an official UK version of *Mario Kart* just in time to compare it to the import versions we've been playing for months. Here's how it looks:

Screen borders
Yup. And whoppers, too. Not *Wave-Race*-size, admitedly, but the the Japanese *Wave Race* had borders to begin with. Not a good start.


PAL NTSC

Speed
Sigh. It's slo-w-e-r. If you've played an import version of *Mario Kart 64* you'll notice the difference straight away, otherwise you probably won't be too bothered – it doesn't look all choppy like *Wave Race*.

Lap times
Wretchedly, lap times are slower by about 20%, *Wave Race*-style, so European gamers will be excluded from competing against *Mario Kart* players elsewhere in the world. On the upside (sort of), the slower speed means short-cuts are much easier to pull off – especially the Mario Raceway ones.

Price
£60? Honestly. Do they still think we're all rich aristocrats here in Britain, or something?

And, er...
Alarmingly, we've had the PAL version of *Mario Kart 64* freeze up on us during a multi-player race – twice – and we've had to press the Reset button and start again. For a console game to crash is unthinkable, especially a Nintendo one, and it's never happened with our Japanese version of *Mario Kart*.

Verdict
Shame on you, Nintendo. We're not all completely oblivious here in Europe. If Konami can be bothered to spend the five minutes it takes to compensate for the differences between PAL and NTSC for *ISS64*, surely you can too. And if it crashes once more, there's no telling what we'll do...
Conversion rating: 4/10. (By comparision, *Wave Race 64* would get 3/10, and *ISS64* would get 10/10.)

Time Trial!

Absolutely the best thing about *Mario Kart 64* is the Time Trial mode, as I discovered when the rest of **N64** Magazine had to go off and write other bits of the magazine and I was left to play *MK64* by myself.

It's an incredibly simple idea: you pick one of the 16 tracks and then drive three laps of it as quickly as possible. But the handling of the kart is so precise, and the circuits are so well designed, that it's possible to race around the same circuit for weeks and still keep getting quicker at it. There are so many levels to it: learning the tracks, taking corners as well as possible, introducing powersliding and mini-turbos, trying the short cuts. When you watch Formula 1 qualifying sessions on telly it seems inconceivable that drivers can drive two-and-a-half mile laps and come within hundredths of a second of each other, but the same happens here. And, though this might sound a bit weird, it's supremely satisfying shaving another 0.03 seconds off your time.

Even after six months' practice, I've only just got below 1'15" on Mario Circuit on the Japanese version. My time? Oh. Well, I'll tell you anyway: 1'12"71.

Graphics? Sound? All that sort of thing? To be honest, there's so much going on the whole time in *Mario Kart 64* that you don't have time to stop and think about such things. But, taking a step back, this isn't as technically gob-smacking a game as some of the N64's other top-notch titles. It's got some lovely touches – the reflections on the ice in Sherbert Land, the train running around Kalimari Desert, the overhead TV screens – but, with its cartoony feel, this isn't a game you see for the first time and go "Flip!" It's been designed from the 'gameplay' up, in contrast to racing games on other consoles which can feel more like graphics demonstrations with moveable cars tacked on.

When *Super Mario Kart* appeared on SNES release lists back in 1992, Nintendo fans fiddled nervously with their ear lobes. A Mario game – but without any platforms? Surely some mistake? But within seconds of its release, *Super Mario Kart* had established itself as one of gaming history's greats: something completely original, a racing game with a sense of fun and that brilliant balloon game.

Mario Kart 64 doesn't have the advantage of originality, being an update of an existing game, so it's never going to create quite the same buzz as *SMK*. And, annoyingly, it's not 'perfect' in the way that Nintendo's own games usually are. And the PAL conversion is a typical Nintendo of Europe rush job, and very disappointing. But, nevertheless, I adore it. I've played it more than all the N64's other games put together, and, six months after plugging it in for the first time, I still love it as much as ever. It's great.

JONATHAN

MULTI-PLAYER TIPS!

VERSUS MODE

- Plump for heavier characters. Kong, Wario and Bowser can barge the others off course, most notably on the starting grid.
- On most courses, skillful use of power-ups is more important than driving ability. So be aware that the items you get depend on your position – Green Shells and Bananas in the first couple of places, Red Shells and Mushrooms in the middle of the pack, and Super Stars, Thunder Bolts and Spiny Shells if you're at the back. Green Shells and Bananas are best used defensively by trailing them behind you by holding Z. It may be worth falling behind another player slightly as you approach a power-up so that you get something better.
- If you get a Thunder Bolt, it's worth holding onto it until the last lap, fighting through the pack and activating it near the end.

VISUALS 8
The stunning 3D world of *Super Mario 64* – but in a racing game.

SOUNDS 8
Cheery music and amusing effects.

MASTERY 9
Packed with stuff, and the four-player split-screen mode would be impossible outside the N64. Crap PAL conversion, though.

LIFESPAN 9
The courses aren't varied enough, but master the controls and it's a much finer prospect.

VERDICT
Months of racing fun packed into a cart the size of a crab.





HOW TO... get world-beating times on Mario Raceway

by Jonathan Davies

Hold down L or R on *Mario Kart 64's* title screen and your best Time Trial time for Mario Raceway will appear. That's because Mario Raceway is the track the world's best *Mario Kart* players compete against each other on. Jonathan explains how you can join them in N64 Magazine's 8-step Mario Raceway masterclass.

When it comes to Time Trialling, Mario Raceway is where it's at. Every bend has been fine-tuned to test even the most proficient karter, and it's possible to go on shaving tenths-of-a-second off your best time for weeks.

For this reason, Nintendo have chosen Mario Raceway as the benchmark for the world's best players, and in Japan and the US they offer golden N64 controllers to the best players. Your task, then, is clear: to become untouchable at it. Here's how to go about it.

Step 1: Choosing the right character



For *Mario Kart* Grand Prix races you'll probably find you're best off with a heavy character like Kong or Wario, who can barge his way through the field. For Time Trialling, though, precision and grass-crossing abilities are called for. Go for Yoshi, Princess Daisy or – the Character of Champions – Toad.

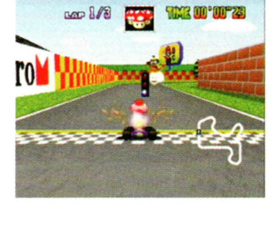
Step 2: Learn the course

Spend some time familiarising yourself with Mario Raceway's twists and turns. You'll need to be able to remember every bend, so that as you're coming out of one you're setting up your kart for the next. Learn to take the racing line through corners, drifting to the outside as you approach, then coming in to clip the apex (it doesn't hurt to cut across the grass a smidgeon) and then drifting to the outside again as you exit. Taking corners gently like this is vital, because the sharper you turn the more your kart will skid, and when your kart's skidding (when there's smoke coming from the tyres) it's losing about 20 km/h off its top speed.



Target time: 2'02"00

Step 3: Turbo start



This is an easy way to shave a couple of second off your overall time. Learn the timing of Lakitu's starting lights, and press and hold the accelerator exactly as the third, blue light comes on. Get it right and your kart will rocket to maximum speed immediately.

Target time: 1'59"00

Step 4: Hopping

Now it's time to start learning some expert *Mario Kart* techniques. The easiest and by far the most useful is hopping. To do this, repeatedly tap the R button as you're steering round a corner. Your kart will hop up and down and, in doing so, turn more tightly. You'll also find that it won't skid, and therefore won't lose nearly so much speed in the corner. Hopping is best used on the sharpest bends, like the hairpin around the big mushroom. A bit of hopping doesn't go amiss on every bend, though. Your times should now be starting to tumble.



Target time: 1'50"00

Step 5: Speed mushrooms
In case you haven't already noticed, your kart comes equipped with three Mushrooms each time you set out on a Time Trial, which works out, handily, at one per lap. The key, then, is to work out where on the course to use them. They'll give you a boost across the finish line if you like, but there's a much better use for them: leaving the track and cutting across big areas of grass. A bit of experimentation reveals that the best place to do this is towards the end of the course, as shown in the picture (white arrow). Hop around the end of the wall until your kart's aimed safely around the trees and then hit Z. You'll blast across the grass, across the track and across the sand trap on the other side, the Mushroom just running out as you rejoin the track to go through the green pipe.



Target time: 1'46"30



Congratulations! You've broken the 1'47" barrier, and your reward, if you attempt Mario Circuit again, is the appearance of Mario himself, racing against you under the control of Nintendo's programmers. You'll notice that he's somehow going miles faster than you've managed so far, though. Clearly there's more work to be done.

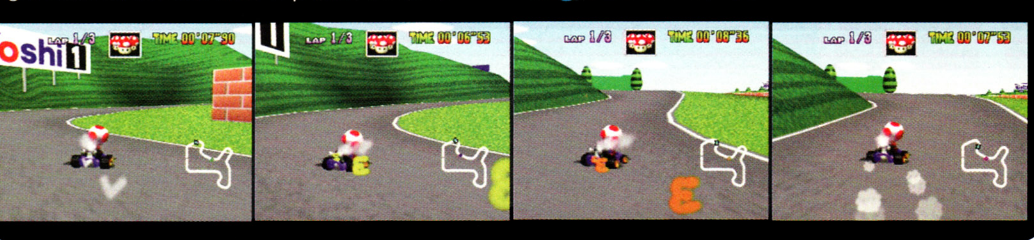
Step 6: Powersliding
Now begins many hours of often frustrating experimentation with powersliding. It's a vital technique, however, and something that you can practise and carry on getting better at for weeks.

Here's the theory. As you reach a corner, move the joystick to steer and then press R to make the kart hop. But hold R down rather than releasing it again, and your kart will start to slide sideways with V-shaped smoke coming out of it. Now gently move the joystick to the opposite side and then back again, still holding R. The smoke should change to yellow, and become E-shaped. Now move the joystick from side to side again and the smoke will turn red. If you now release R as you come out of the corner you'll get a valuable mini-turbo boost.

It's actually incredibly difficult to do all this while at the same time trying to keep your kart going in the right direction, but with loads of practice it'll come naturally. A good place to train, if you're having trouble, is Luigi Raceway with its long, gentle bends.

But the advantages of perfecting powersliding are enormous. First, you can use it to slide sideways across big stretches of grass without losing speed – for example, it's possible to take the first two bends of Mario Raceway in one long, sweeping skid across the grass, putting you ahead of Mario straight away. (You'll need to waggle the joystick gently as you're skidding, though, both to keep you on course and to stop your kart 'overcooking' and spinning out.) Better than that, though, are the little turbo boosts you get. On longer corners you'll eventually be able to get two or three of these in a row by repeatedly going through the white, yellow and red smoke stages. (Again, Luigi Raceway is a great place to practise this.) They don't have much effect individually, but overall they'll add up to many seconds saved.

Target time: 1'40"30



Step 7:
If you're getting mini-turbos on every corner, and cutting perfectly across the grass and sand on every lap, then you'll be getting times that're just about as good as it's possible to get 'legally'. It's time to start bending the rules a bit, and exploiting Mario Raceway's secret short cut. But this is where things start to get really, really hard.

The aim is to leap across the wall just before the hairpin bend with the giant mushroom on it, thus chopping out the slowest part of the course (orange arrow). To do this you'll need to go around the first three bends, coming out of the third with your tyres smoking red and R held down. Now, just before the fourth corner, steer sharply left and drive up the slope a little way. Now steer hard right so you double back on yourself, release R, and hit Z to activate a mushroom. (You'll need to have turned on the slope just before the highest point your kart can reach.) You should now be belting down the slope towards the opposite side of the track and the wall beyond it. Just as you reach the opposite edge of the track, which slopes up a bit to form a little jump, hit R to hop. Do all of this exactly right and you should sail – hgnnn – over the wall and – hahhh – land neatly on the other side.

Getting this right takes an immense amount of skill and luck, and getting it right three times in a row is a near-miracle. But your times should now be getting pretty dazzling. (N.B. As you'll need your mushrooms to make the jump, you'll have to take the last few turns the old-fashioned way.)

Target time: 1'32"00

Step 8: Short Cut 2
That jump, though, is a walk in the park compared with what's needed to compete with the best in the world. The chances are you'll have been clearing the wall and landing to the left of the wall that joins it on the other side, chopping off the hairpin only. What you need to be doing, though, unfortunately, is landing to the *right* of that wall, which is about 100 times harder but cuts out nearly half the course (blue arrow). The technique is the same, you just need to tap the joystick lightly to the right as you hop. I've only managed to do it twice in a row once, and was so surprised I crashed into a tree. (I still got a time of 1'12"71, though – that was on the Japanese version.) You'll need to do it three times. I wish you luck.

Target time: Times of under 1'00"00 are reported by US and Japanese karters who've perfected this shortcut, which would translate into under 1'12"00 for PAL karters. And the world record, held by a Japanese player, is 0'51"94 (or about 1'03"00 in Pal-o-vision). Blimey, eh?

PREVIOUSLY IN N64 We gave *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* a good shoeing in issue 1 as well.







MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

Mortal Kombat Trilogy		
MIDWAY		
July	64M / ~~Controller Pak back-up~~	1-2 / On-cartridge back-up
£55		

Cash in? Cop out? Corny? Mmm, yes. Midway's *MKT* hits Blighty...

TRILOGY O' JUSTICE

Differences. That's what we're talking about, here. And are there any between Midway's rustled-up travesty and the SNES's six-month-old *UMK*? Bah. Well, if there are, they're minor. The N64 has a slightly smoother finish and more detailed backgrounds, but the characters are strikingly similar in both. And, speed- and moves-wise, the games are exactly the same. Rubbish...

UMK (SNES)





MKT (N64)



M*ortal Kombat*, then. Mmm? Yes. Thought so. Oh, once it was a game you'd quite happily boast about being good at. A game that was once very enjoyable, even. A game that entertained through its sheer blood-slapped violence. But now it looks just a tad weary. Like your Dad at a disco, it thinks it's better than it is.

Perhaps it's unfair to once again compare *Mortal Kombat* with the likes of *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter*, as Midway's game claims to be nothing other than a flat, 2D affair. But surely it should be better than this puddle of puke? Surely there should be some invention, or even (sigh) some evidence that we're dealing with an N64 game, here. Pfff. If only.

What, in fact, we have is a conversion of the PlayStation game with n-o-t-h-i-n-g added. Nothing. No extra visuals. No extra speed. NOTHING. Indeed, look carefully and you'll notice several features that are worse in 64-bit than they ever were in 32. Firstly, the game appears not to be as high-res as the PlayStation's effort, and certainly lacks key animation frames. Secondly, whack someone through a stage's roof and you'll witness some awful slowdown. And, thirdly, the sound appears to have been pieced together in a wind tunnel, with sampled speech and bone-crunching effects only just about audible as you decapitate your opponent.

Yes, yes, there'll be those that refuse to believe us, or think we 'have it in' for *Mortal Kombat*. But we haven't. Once, we enjoyed it. No, really. Now, though, it's a tired, cobweb-strewn mess of a game. Even the advent of the Aggressor Mode – where said word forms at the bottom of the screen as you get in more hits and then allows you to produce harder, more meter-emptying slaps – and the two-player game can't save it from that. Its characters are clichéd, their stories filled to breaking point with more corn than's grown in Kansas in a year, and at least 10 or 12 of them play and look exactly the same.

So, the solution? Well, there isn't one, sadly. *Killer Instinct Gold* feels just as knackered, while Midway's other forray, *War Gods*, is second in the 'least wanted' stakes only to hours of painfull surgery. More promising beat-'em-ups – *Mace, Dark Rift* and *Struggle Hard* – are on the horizon, so hold tight and then re-ignite your interest in beat-'em-ups later in the year.

TIM

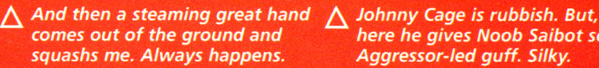




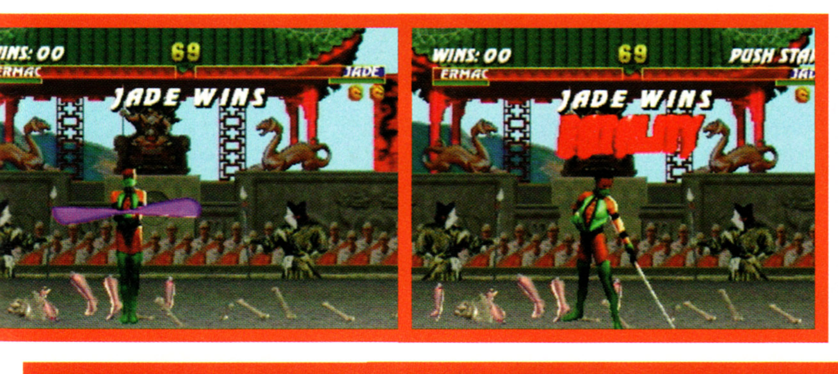
And then a steaming great hand comes out of the ground and squashs me. Always happens.



Johnny Cage is rubbish. But, here he gives Noob Saibot some Aggressor-led guff. Silky.



A quick axe to the face always sorts the men out from the boys. And gives you cut-price skin treatment. Lucky, then, that if you're an MK character you can by-pass this due to having an energy bar. Handy!



△ *Major organ and bone dispersal is, as ever, encouraged in Mortal Kombat. Really very pleasant.*

Smoke-girl, Jade, 'does' for Reptile by fumegating the level with her coal-like odours. She really stinks. ▽

WRONG!
Five things that should never – not ever – appear in another beat-'em up…

1. Stories. "After being expelled from the Outer Worldly dimension…" Dump!
2. TJ Combo. He's got a pair of boxing gloves and an eye patch. Jeez, any more handicaps?
3. A commentator who repeats the name of the fighters in a voice so low it could start earthquakes.
4. Fighters with guns. The words 'unfair' and 'advantage' spring quickly to mind.
5. Stupidly named fighters. Noob Saibot? Jax? Freakin' Kabuki Jo? Tsch.



△ *Liu Kang takes a well earned rest from heart-ripped-from-the-chest action. Nice and that.*



△ *If all else fails. why not get old a steaming great gun and bullet-riddle your opponent?*



4 VISUALS
Transparencies offer the only respite. Otherwise, worth crying over

2 SOUNDS
Get under your duvet and get your dog to bark at you. It'll be considerably better.

0 MASTERY
Of course not.



Difficulty settings, destinies and that make for some respite. SOME.

VERDICT
Once, we would have rejoiced. But with 64-bit technology at our disposal, we can barely muster a smile. Vastly, disturbingly over-rated.



And then I tore his head off… Which was nice

So, *Trilogy's* top of your shopping list. Sigh. Well, then, you just better get used to this little lot…

FATALITIES
Finish Him! Yep, age-old body-ripping returns agaaaaain with Jack the Ripper-style decapitation/disembowelment antics. Yawn.

BRUTALITIES
Trilogy-specific. Scatters your opponent over Russia-like expanses of space and throws a blood, organ and bone cocktail in for afters.

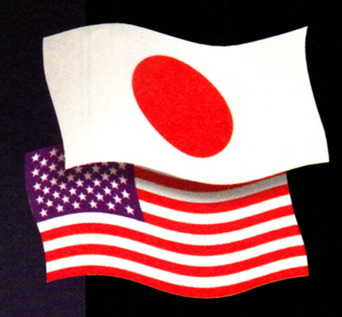
BABALITIES
Get your octopi-fingers working in silken co-ordination and you can turn your opponent into a – get this, buddy-o! – baby. Antiques Roadshow out-takes are more interesting.



ANIMALITIES
Turn into an animal and bite your opponent's head off. Mornin'! We've heard of rabies, but this is ridiculous.

FRIENDSHIP
Instead of a foot/head rendezvous, be friends. Fantastic, yet tragically pointless.





From this page on, every game reviewed in **N64** is only available on Japanese and US import. We'll do more in future issues on any that're released in the UK.

IMPORT ARENA





△ *Blue shorts beat green skirts any day of the week. It's all to do with freedom of movement.*

WAR GODS

Once more into the theatre of pain, dear friends.

▽ *A ten-hit combo is your ultimate aim, something you might find tricky with some of the slower characters, especially 'big boy' Tak. His 'Boulder Roll' is always worth a laugh, though.*







△ "Oh no! I've been trapped inside an enormous blue pyramid. AGAIN!"

▽ Good to see that Midway haven't held back with the blood. It's just another element that adds to the overall Mortal Kombat feel.

△ Kabuki Jo pulls off his 'Ring of Fire' containment move. He'll probably rush over now and clout Voodoo one on the nose. He's that 'kinda' guy

▽ Ker–THWACK! "Where's he gone?"

WAR GODS Predicted Life Cycle

BIRTH

TIME: DAY 0, 10:01 HRS

Life Stage: Excitement
The virginal cart is hatched from its cardboard packaging.

TIME: DAY 0, 10:02 HRS

Life Stage: Interest
Cart in slot. The game is played for the very first time.

TIME: DAY 0, 10:23 HRS

Life Stage: Creeping Unease
"Am I missing something here?"

TIME: DAY 0, 10:41 HRS

Life Stage: Mounting Worry
"PLEASE GOD, AM I MISSING SOMETHING HERE?"

TIME: DAY 0, 11:03 HRS

Life Stage: Dawning Realisation
"Something's missing here."

TIME: DAY 0, 11:05 HRS

Life Stage: Embryonic Depression
"I've bought one of the N64's legendary 'bad' games."

TIME: DAY 0, 12:43 HRS

Life Stage: Depression
"I've bought one of the N64's legendary 'bad' games. With my own money."

TIME: DAY 1, 14:00 HRS

Life Stage: Desperation
"Surely there has to be something good about this..."

TIME: DAY 1, 14:10 HRS

Life Stage: Despair
"No. There isn't."

TIME: DAY 2, 09:31 HRS

Life Stage: Second Hand Shop
"When's Zelda out, again?"

DEATH

CHEAT SHEET

To enhance your enjoyment of *War Gods* even further, why not take advantage of these lovely cheats? To enter them, use the D-pad for the direction commands, as the Analogue can be a bit hit-and-miss.

CHEAT MENU

(Includes options to turn off game timer, handicap players and opt for 'easy' fatalities). At the title screen (before the Start/Options menu appears), quickly tap Right, Right, Right, B, B, A, A. "Too Easy" should be the commentator's bass reply.

PLAY AS GROX

On the Character Select Screen, tap Down, Right, Left, Left, Up, Down, Right, Up, Left, and Left. "Too easy!" should be the familiar reply. You can now choose any character and Start the game. You'll play as Grox (one of the game's two bosses) for the first round of your tournament.




GO! GO!

Time to meet the freaks!

10 playable characters. WARNING! you may have seen some of these people before.

Key
F = Forward B = Back U = Up
D = Down
3D = 3D Button (L)
HP= High Punch (B)
LP = Low Punch (A)
HK = High Kick (Top C)
LK = Low Kick (Right C)
BL = Block (Left C)

Basic Moves
These work for all 10 characters.

Ordinary moves
Flying Punch: U/UF/UB+HP/LP
Flying Kick: U/UF/UB+HK/LK
Crouching Ankle Kick: D+LK
Crouching Kick: D+HK
Crouching Punch: D+LP
Uppercut: D+HP
Fierce Kick: B+HK
Sweep: B+LK
Throw: F+LP (Close)
Run: F, F
Walk in 3rd: (3D) U/D
Slide in 3rd: (3D)U, U/D, D
Jump in 3rd: (3D+BL)U/D
Ground Moves
Pounce: U+HP, U+HP, U+HP (while opponent is down)
Evasive Manoeuver: B+BL (while you are down)
Get-Up Attack: F+HP+LP (while you are down)

Combo Starters
Ahau Kin/Cy-5: B, F, HK
All others: B, F, HP (or just run and HP)

Basic Finishers
Ahau Kin/Cy-5 AutoCombo: (3D Button) B, F, HK
AutoCombo for all others: (3D Button) B, F, HP

Ring Specials
Fierce Kick: (3D Button) B+HK (Close)
Uppercut: D+HP (Close)

CY-5



A two-legged relation of K-9, Doctor Who's famed metallic sidekick (true!), CY-5 is one of the weaker characters. His High Beam and Electric Shot missile attacks are good for catching opponents unawares, though.

Blender: D, B, HP
Laser: B, D, F, LP
Overhead Laser: (3D Button) B, D, F, HP
Teleport: D, B, LK
Gain Orbital: B, B, LP (Up to 4)
Fire Orbital: Gain, HP+LP
Combo: HK, F, D, B, HPx2, LPx2
Breaker: (3D Button) D, U+HP+LK
Fatality: B, B, HP (Half Ring)

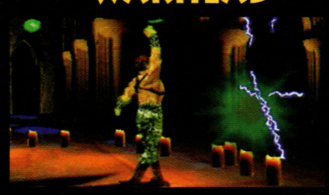
MAXIMUS



No relation of Maximus Prime of Transformers fame, Maximus looks as if he could handle himself in a fight. As it turns out, he just hasn't got enough moves to compete with the big boys. Which is, you know, a shame.

Hammer: D/F, LP
Hammer Throw: D/B, HP
Shockwave: (3D Button) U, D, LP
Noogie: F, F, HP (HP to add up to 3)
Net: B, F, HP+LP
Headbutt: B, F, LP
Reversal: B, HP (opp attacking)
Combo: HP, LP, F, F, LK, LP, HPx2, LP, B, D, F, LP
Breaker: F, F+HP+LP
Fatality: (3D Button) F, F, HP+LP (Close)

WARHEAD



He might not have many moves, but get Warhead's missiles and Quake Punch to work and you'll be laughing (in a deep Satanic fashion, of course). The only War God with war in his name. Fantastic.

Missiles: D, B, LP
Seekers: (3D Button) D, B, LP
Quake Punch: (3D Button) B, D, F, HP
Cannonball: B, F, HK+LK
Crusher: F, B, HP
Combo: HPx2, LPx2, LKx2, HKx2, LP
Breaker: 3D, B, B, F, HP
Fatality: F, D, B, HK (Half Ring)

PAGAN



As Pagan is a female fighter, she's obviously opted to go into battle with very few clothes. She also has a predilliction for waving her wobbly bits at you if she wins. Did someone say "sad adolescent fantasy"? Oh, must have been me.

Skeleton Trap: B, D, F, LP
Teleport: D, D, LK
Lightning: D, B, HP
Leg Flip: F, F, HK
CopterKick: D, F, HK+LK (HK+LK to continue)
Combo: HP, HK, HP, HKx3, LKx2, HP
Breaker: B, B, B, F+HK+LK
Fatality: B, F, LP (Half Ring) B

AHUA KIN



It's a man in a skirt – and he's not Scottish! Any fool can see that to high kick, Ahua Kin (the Vicar sneezed over the font) must have to show his pants to his opponent – if, indeed, he wears any. We can but hope he does, for their sake.

BlowGun: B, F, HP
Double BlowGun: B, B, F, HP
Triple BlowGun: B, B, B, F, HP
Sunburst: B, F, LP
Teleport: D, U, LK
Clothesline: F, F, HK+LK
Dagger: D, F, LP
Sword Swipe: D, B, HP (F+HP for extra swipe)
Combo: HK, LK, HK, LPx2, HPx3, HK
Breaker: F, B, F, B+HK+LK
Fatality: (3D Button) U, D, U, HK (Close)

VALLAH



Another women dressed rather on the 'scanty' side. Vallah's funniest move is the Gator Bite, which pins her opponent in the enormous skull jaws of a alligator and allows her to punch the hell out of them without reply.

Dragon Trap: F, D, B, HP
Shield Slice: D+B, LP
Axe Throw: D, F, LP
Double Axe Throw: (3D Button) D, F, LP
Sword Slash: B, F, HP
Shield Dash: B, F, HK+LK
Double Sword Slice: (LP) F, B, HP
Axe Chop: B, B, HP
Combo: HP, LKx2, HP, LPx2, HP, B, D, F, F, D, B
Breaker: (3D Button) D, B+LK
Fatality: F, F, LK (Close)



△ *"Unhand me, Sir! I absolutely will not be treated in this fashion."*

Duh, looook at da pretty laydee. She makes me feel funnie. ▷

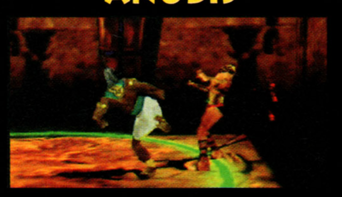
It's weird, really. Midway have the license to do an N64 *Mortal Kombat* game, and, in *War Gods*, a reasonable 3D fighting engine to do it with. But instead of making *Mortal Kombat 4* – i.e., the first three-dimensional MK game – they opt to chuck out an ill-formed *MK Trilogy* (see page 44) and release *War Gods* as a, supposedly, completely separate game. You can only hope they've got something substantial up their sleeves for the real *MK4*.

Because *War Gods* is *Mortal Kombat* Lite. It's got the same control arrangement, gloomy atmosphere, ridiculous storyline, fatalities, blood and, well, sad to say, sense of mind-numbing tedium. The only two things that differentiate *War Gods* are its 3D-ness and its cast of 12 'all-new' characters. The fact that it's rubbish is also, unfortunately, a major point of similarity.

Problem 1:

Character design. If you were looking for a guide to beat-'em-up clichés, *War Gods* would be the very thing to use. On the 12-character roster we have the obligatory 'fat bloke', Tak, who's – sigh – slow but strong. Following him we have two scantily clad females, Vallah and Pagan, who, apart from revealing far more than is tactically advisable, are fast but – step back in amazement – a bit weak. Then there are the 'action heroes', Maximus, Warhead

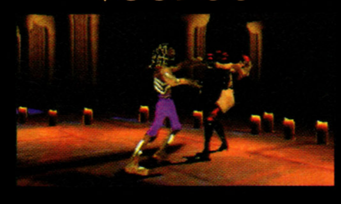
ANUBIS



For *War Gods* pros (we believe there are some), Anubis is one of *the* characters to get handy with. He's got a teleport and a containment move as well as some fairly hard 'big stick' attacks. Head of a dog as well, which must be difficult socially.

Staff Chop: D+F, HK
Staff Sweep: D, B, LK
Staff Spark: D+F, HP
Teleport Attack: B, F, LK
Horn Charge: F, D, B, HK+LK
Pyramid Containment: D+B, LP
Combo: HP, HK, HP, LP, BL, F, F, B, F, HK+LK
Breaker: (3D Button) B, U, F+HK
Fatality: F, D, B, HP+LK (Half Ring)

VOODOO



The voodoo hoodoo what-you-don't-dare-do person. Will you look at the fingers on this! Another character erring on the stronger side, with his bat attack a particular favourite of Wil's. Mind you, anything with 'pretty lights' or 'funny faces' makes him smile.

Bat Attacks: D, B, HP
Low Bat Attack: D, B, LP
Snake Pull-in: B, B, LP
Teleport: B, F, LK
NailDown: (3D Button) B, D, F, HP
Spinning Claw: B, F, HP+LP (HP+LP to continue spinning)
Bitch Slap: F, B, LP (LP for more)
Combo: HP, HK, HP, LKx3, LPx2, HK, HP
Breaker: F, D, B+HP+LP
Fatality: B, F, LP (Half Ring)

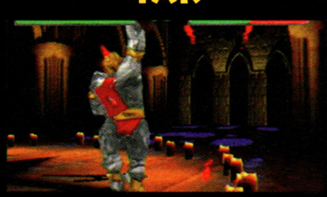
KABUKI-JO



Tim's favourite character, but only lbecause of his hilariously hard name. Kabuki (as his friends call him) is a bad clown who, perversely enough, is one of the best characters in the whole of the *War Gods* travesty.

Short Fire: B, F, LP
Medium Fire: B, B, F, LP
Long Fire: B, B, B, F, LP
Staff: F, D, B, HP, LP, LK
StarThrow: D, F, HP
FireTrap: B, D, F, LK
StarSpread: (3D Button) D, F, LP
Sword Fury: F, F, HP+LP
Combo: HP, HK, LPx2, HK+LK, D, F, HK+LK
Breaker: 3D, U, D, U+LK
Fatality: B, D, F, HK+LK (Sweep)

TAK



A-ha, the obligatory fat-bloke-in-beat-'em-up! Tak can throw rocks at people and do a couple of nice throws, but he's a bit slow and fat for much else. I expect you could have guessed that from his picture. Lardy.

Rock Crush: D, B, HP
Boulder: D, F, LP
Quake Stomp: (3D Button) B, D, F, LK
PowerSlam: F, B, HP
Body Rack: F, B, HP+U,U,D
Vertical Suplex: F, B, L
Combo: HPx2, LPx2, LKx2, HPx2, HK
Breaker: (3D Button) B, F+HP
Fatality: B, D, F, LP+HK (Close)

FUNGUS THE BOGEYMAN

You can only play as the two bosses, Grox and Exor, by entering the appropriate code at the selection screen. They're fat boys both and their moves go something like this:

Exor

Force Field: F, F, HP
Containment Orb: F, D, B, HP
Grounded Laser: B, D, F, LP
Arial Laser: F, F, HK
Arial MultiLaser 1: B, B, HP+LP
Arial MultiLaser 2: B, F, HP+LP
Teleport: F, F, LK
Teleport Arial Laser: F, D, B, HK
Telekinetic Slam: F+LP
Turn-Around Backfist: B, B, LP

Grox

Belly Splash: B, F, HK+LK
Ragdoll Throw: F, B, LP (Close)
Hammer Fist: F, F, HP
Shockwave Stomp: B, U, F, LK
Forearm Attack: B, F, HP
Belly Bump: B, F, HP+LP
MiniStomp: F+HP (Close)



EASY FATALITIES

With the easy fatality option enabled in the cheat menu, simply press A, B, Top C and Right C simultaneously to pull off your finisher. Opponents must be the correct distance from each other for fatalities to work.

and Ahua Kin, with the usual array of missile attacks and special moves; the cyborg, Cy-5, who has lasers for eyes; and the out-and-out weirdos, Voodoo, Kabuki Jo, and Anubis. "That's only 10. What of the last two?" you gasp breathlessly. "They'll be the hidden bosses – fat, tight-panted monsters only available to 'be' using cheat codes" comes the unsurprising and jaded reply.

Problem 2:

animation. Call me old-fashioned, but the status 'God' implies someone/thing with a bit of style – a bit of élan and je ne sais quois. On top of this, I'd then be expecting someone/thing who's just a little bit 'hard'. In that light, it's disappointing to find that most of the War Gods prefer to mince around with all the screen menace of some demented Charles Haughtry/Julian Clary/John Inman polymorph. It doesn't matter that the game takes place in glorious 3D-O-Vision™, because for the most part the characters are so unbelievable that it wouldn't matter how many dimensions they occupied – they'd still look camper than a Caravan Club rally.

Problem 3:

Been there, done that. I have, you have, your mates have, your brothers and sisters have. Even your parents have got bored of having sneaky goes while you were out. Listen up, Midway, this is the news.

Mortal Kombat might have been new, shiny and exciting seven years ago, but endlessly repackaging it, renaming it and reflogging it is not the way forward. I've slung my last fireball, pulled off my last combo and tapped out my final pesky fatality. This is the same old tat – 3D or not – and I want no more of it, thanks all the same.

There is no joy in *War Gods*, no thrill of discovery or must-finish challenge. Instead we've just got a load of stupid characters who, for farcical reasons that no one should be forced to listen to, want to beat the bloody hell out of each other. Technically, it's not the sad disaster that *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* was, but it offers similarly desperate levels of interest, longevity and originality. It's the kind of mass-produced pap that will excite only the lowest common denominator of gamers – the most uncritical, undemanding of cart buyers on green old planet Earth. Out first in America? Must just be a co-incidence.

JAMES

6 VISUALS
3D, yes, but a fairly amateur rendition and disappointingly low-res with it

4 SOUNDS
The voice is hilarious. "Kabuki Jo WiinNSSS" is the official **N64** phrase-of-the-month.

4 MASTERY
Yeah, this and *Mah Jong 64* are masters of the N64

1 LIFESPAN
A Day One entry to the critical list. On the Iron lung by mid-afternoon.

VERDICT
Another substandard beat-'em up from Midway. *Killer Instinct's* sprites are far more fun than *War Gods'* polygons. Play with those instead.



TO BE CONTINUED... *We'll take another peak at War Gods for its UK release.*

HOW TO... master International Superstar Soccer 64

By Tim Weaver

Managing an *ISS64* football side can be torturous. Decisions – sometimes heartbreaking – have to be made in order to reach the misty mountain tops of the World Cup Final or the distant dream that is the League Championship. There's going to be anguish along the way, but, damn, there's *bound* to be some joy too.

And the beautiful unpredictability of football means you're never quite sure in which order those emotions are going to come. But there are ways of trying to concrete-set that ever-elusive success. Ways and means. And sometimes you're going to have to be tactical, sometimes skillful, sometimes even sneaky. Then, sometimes, you're going to have to cheat. The walk down the tunnel starts here...



THE DRESSING ROOM

Pre-match, in the Deep Heat-scented air of the dressing room, tactical decision-making has to be your main priority. You're faced with seven options, four of which will prove particularly vital in your footballing scholarship...

Member



Gives you free reign over who exactly graces your starting eleven. In reality, there isn't a lot of difference between, say, Gascoigne and the next midfielder – even though their stats might vary – as on-field they'll perform the same function regardless of speed, skill or strength ratings. In *ISS64* there are no position-specific players – defenders are solely defenders, not wing-backs, centre backs or full-backs – so replacing Neville with Adams shouldn't affect the balance of your side too much.

Formation



Here, there are four vital functions to perform. The first, 'Formation' itself, is simply a question of choosing how to play. Experienced players will find 5-3-2 gives them something extra at the back, **in the shape of a sweeper,** and packs out the midfield. 4-4-3 or 4-4-2 will also give enough shape to perform perfectly well, but your back line's flat so it's worth taking into account the fact that **once it's penetrated there's not a fifth man to clear things up.**

3-5-2 is an interesting playing style, especially if you can employ the services of two wingbacks, but getting caught on the counter attack will undoubtedly do for you.

The rest are generally for when you're creaked. 2-3-5, let's be honest, isn't the sort of formation you'd play against Germany in the World Cup Final. Unless you wanted them prancing round Berlin *aggggaaaaiiiiinnnn* yelling "4-0, to the Ger-man-ieeeeee". In German.

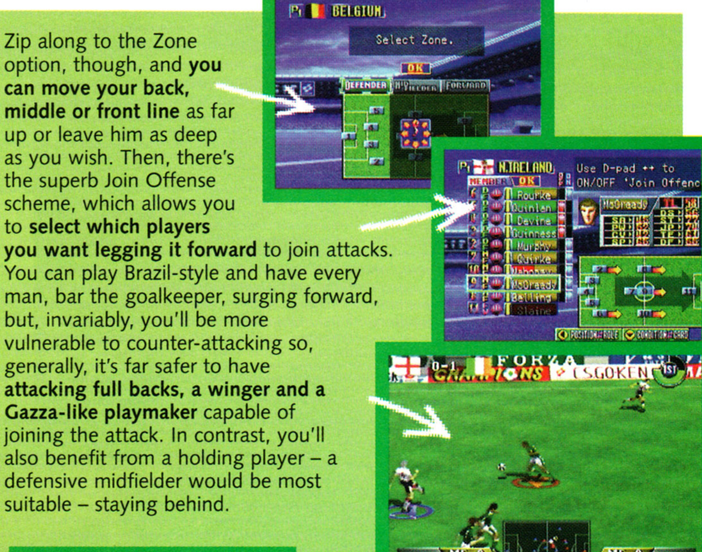
On from that, **you can individually position players** using the Position option. Simply select your player and then manoeuvre him to where you want him playing. It's a fairly simple process, although with the field split into thirds you can't take him outside the defensive, midfield or striking sections.



Strategy

If the Formation choices don't provide you with enough tactical flexibility, then the Strategy options undoubtedly will. Here, you can choose your playing set-up from eight alternatives: all-out defence, all-out offense, counter-attacking, pressing-up, wing-attacking, packing the midfield, packing the defence with one man up, or the offside trap. Then, once you take to the field, by simply tapping the Z-trigger and designated C-button, you can put into action the strategy of your choice. Some are more effective than others. The counter-attacking option, for example, doesn't really work unless you're playing at least three strikers and your opponents are pushing players up consistently. But the packed midfield stifles creative opponents, and all-out defending and attacking are particularly handy if you're trying either to sit on a score or to get back into the game.





Zip along to the Zone option, though, and **you can move your back, middle or front line** as far up or leave him as deep as you wish. Then, there's the superb Join Offense scheme, which allows you to **select which players you want legging it forward** to join attacks. You can play Brazil-style and have every man, bar the goalkeeper, surging forward, but, invariably, you'll be more vulnerable to counter-attacking so, generally, it's far safer to have **attacking full backs, a winger and a Gazza-like playmaker** capable of joining the attack. In contrast, you'll also benefit from a holding player – a defensive midfielder would be most suitable – staying behind.



And, finally, if you're not sure exactly what your player's role is you can always check out the Role Info icon which describes exactly what your player does.

GO! GO!

Marking

The key to nullifying any opponent is neutralising their danger men. But it requires some thought. In truth, the best policy is to play a Sweeper system so that **your fifth man can pick up the runner from midfield** (check who exactly is the runner by looking at your opponent and seeing if any of the midfield have been enrolled into the Join Offense thingy) and then put your two centre backs on the front strikers. Virtually none of the sides in *ISS64* play more than two up front, but, if they do, simply place a defensive midfielder onto the third attacker. Then, once the opposition's front line is sorted out, **snuff out the left- and right-sided midfielders** by placing your full backs on them, seriously limiting wing play. Never worry about placing your strikers on the opposition's defence as it concentrates their movement into a smaller area of the field. And remember: **marking doesn't guarantee your opponents won't score.** You'll still need to time those sliding tackles meticulously well.







TAKING TO THE FIELD

Corners

There are two ways of scoring from a corner. The first is to **line the cursor up with your near-post player**, keep the A button pressed and then, as soon as your corner-taker has knocked the ball in, bring your player towards him. You'll now collect the ball and there'll be space for you to turn, **run back into the box and score with a far-post strike**. The second way is with long, out-swinging corner (so the goalkeeper won't come and collect). Simply **line the cursor up with the penalty spot** and use Left C to chip one in at just under full power. Your players, previously occupying the edge of the area, will run in and, providing you've been tapping the B button vigorously, **send a bullet-header home.** Note: this won't work as well against human opponents, as the CPU-controlled teams tend not to go for headers so much in the box. Whereas your mate most certainly will.



Free Kicks

Direct the cursor so that it's **pointing through the wall and as far into the corner of the goal as possible.** The hardest part about stroking home a free kick isn't which button to use – you'll quickly realise the B Button is by far the most effective – but how much power to allow. Generally speaking, if you're right on the edge of the penalty area, you'll need between 50 and 75% power, whereas anything between 18 yards and 25 will require 75 to 100% power. Once you've get a rough idea, goals are almost certainly likely to flourish.







Penalties



When keeping goal, you can actually **wait for the shot to be struck before diving** *and* reach the ball every time. Simply direct the analogue stick in the relevant direction and press the A or B button. Doing this the other way round will result in your 'keeper collapsing to the floor in a horrible mess. Taking a penalty, on the other hand, is considerably more difficult. Against the computer, try placing your shots in either top corner. He'll invariably struggle to reach these. Or, alternatively, **send a missile-like strike down the centre**, just above the goalkeeper's head. They hardly ever raise their hands in these situations.



Defending



When defending your fortress, there's a number of things to remember. Firstly, the computer much prefers to attack through the middle, meaning that by **putting markers on its midfielders** you'll easily snuff out its quick passing game. Secondly, if conceding goals is a problem, simply **use the Strategy option and select All Out Defence**. If your opponent tries to attack, your defenders will surround him before he knows where he is. Thirdly, never – not ever, mind – **slide an opponent in the penalty area or from behind if they've broken through**, unless you're absolutely positive you can make the challenge. Penalties will result from any hasty foot-to-leg manoeuvre in the area, while being the last man and bringing down the striker will see cards going distinctly reddish. If you need to do something smartish about the troublesome striker, **press the B button for a Charge Tackle**.





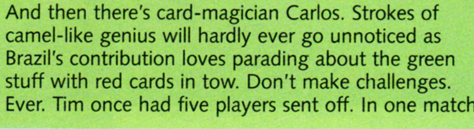


The Referees

● HASEGAWA
Much of the time you'll be lucky to see Hasegawa's smiling face, as he's quite content to let you get away with whatever the dickens you like. Slide someone in the area? Carry on. Studs-up kicking in an opponent's groin? Go on, go on. Perfect for fouler James.

● HEINZ
Heinz is quite willing to let the game flow as much as possible, but performing a fist/face pincer movement on an opponent would be somewhat ill-advised. Will only reach for the pocket if, in the words of Grant Mitchell, "you're bang out of order". Oh yes.

● CARLOS
And then there's card-magician Carlos. Strokes of camel-like genius will hardly ever go unnoticed as Brazil's contribution loves parading about the green stuff with red cards in tow. Don't make challenges. Ever. Tim once had five players sent off. In one match.



WIN WITH WEAK TEAMS

Sides: Greece, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Cameroon

- Opt for a 4-5-1, 5-4-1 or 5-3-2 formation. This gives you a relative amount of security at the back.
- When shooting, tap at the B Button. Keep it pressed and the strikers will send shots rocketing all over the shop.
- Try to steer clear of the speed-up as your players are likely to have poor stamina. Try zig-zagging runs instead.
- Always play two defensive midfielders in front of the back four/five. This provides extra cover for your keeper, who's, frankly, rubbish.

WIN WITH AVERAGE TEAMS

Sides: Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Austria, Wales, Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Poland, South Africa, Mexico, Uruguay, USA

- Try playing a 5-3-2, 4-4-2 or 4-4-3.
- Use your wingers to inject speed into proceedings. They'll tire less easily than the other members of the team.
- Don't play through the centre if you're playing a flat back four, as counter-attacking teams will find it easier to penetrate with through balls.





WIN WITH STRONG TEAMS

Sides: Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, England, Scotland, Russia, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Nigeria, Brazil, Argentina, Columbia

- Use the speed-up copiously as, over 90 minutes, your players are unlikely to tire.
- 3-5-2 or 3-4-3 can be played with a fair amount of ease, although a flat back four would, generally, be more advisable.
- Play 5-3-2, with a sweeper, and you're almost certainly guaranteed honours. (See Tim's 27-game winning run against James for further details.)

As the great Graham Taylor once commented: "We'll do our talking on the field." Sadly for him, his team's talking turned out to be more a mixture of mumbling and dribbling. But that doesn't have to be the case for you. Simply follow these four easy-to-use move guides for the best possible results...

MOVE A: Down The Wings

Best Formation: 4-3-3

How To: Roll the ball out to your full back (A button) and let him carry it as far as he can before an opponent starts tracking him. Now, slide a forward pass (B button) through to your midfielder (there should always be someone, in the middle, on this side of the field) and immediately tap the through ball button so it seeks out your front man. A marker will be on him, so use your middle striker in a cunning one-two (Right C) and you'll be into the area. Keep the shot low and powerful (which means keeping B pressed) and your shot will soar into the far corner. If in doubt, take it round and past the goalkeeper by using the speed-up.

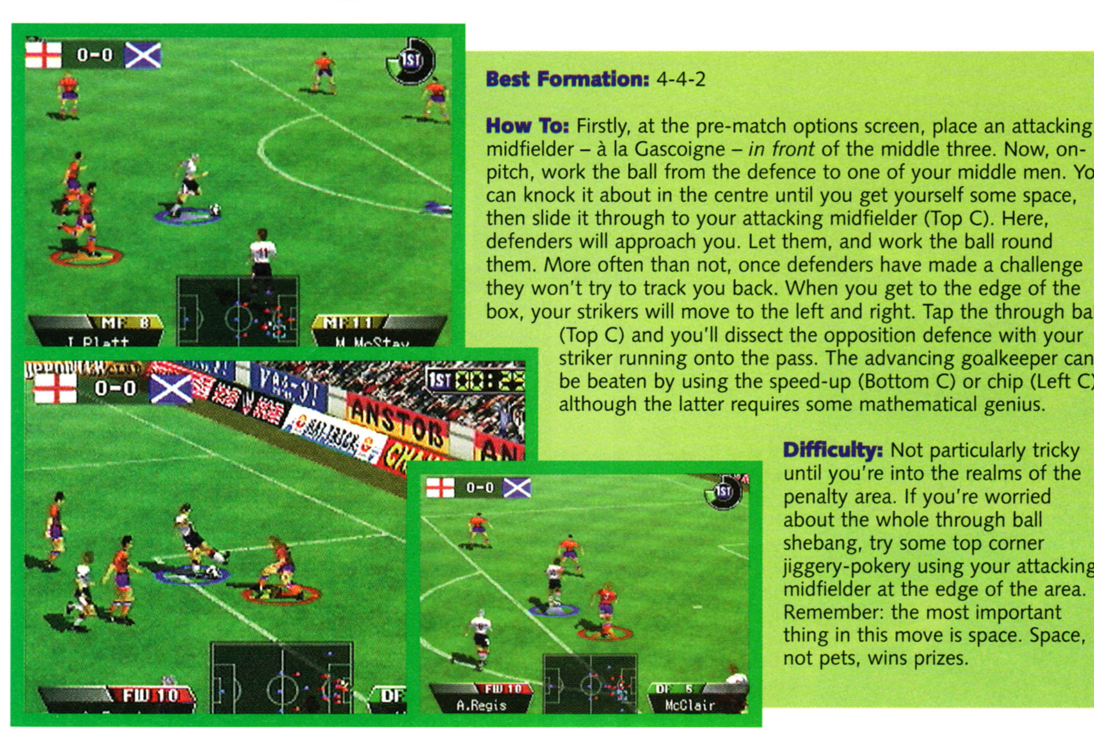
Difficulty: The first two thirds of this three-part equation shouldn't be any problem, but outwitting world class defences is something altogether more potent. However, one-twos are so tricky that no one – CPU player or otherwise – will expect a successful end result.





MOVE B: Through The Middle





Best Formation: 4-4-2

How To: Firstly, at the pre-match options screen, place an attacking midfielder – à la Gascoigne – *in front* of the middle three. Now, on-pitch, work the ball from the defence to one of your middle men. You can knock it about in the centre until you get yourself some space, then slide it through to your attacking midfielder (Top C). Here, defenders will approach you. Let them, and work the ball round them. More often than not, once defenders have made a challenge they won't try to track you back. When you get to the edge of the box, your strikers will move to the left and right. Tap the through ball (Top C) and you'll dissect the opposition defence with your striker running onto the pass. The advancing goalkeeper can be beaten by using the speed-up (Bottom C) or chip (Left C), although the latter requires some mathematical genius.

Difficulty: Not particularly tricky until you're into the realms of the penalty area. If you're worried about the whole through ball shebang, try some top corner jiggery-pokery using your attacking midfielder at the edge of the area. Remember: the most important thing in this move is space. Space, not pets, wins prizes.

MOVE C: The Long Ball

Best Formation: 3-5-2

How To: "It's not pretty but it gets results," said George Graham. And he's – quietly now – *right*. But playing the long ball is an ink blot on your footballing copybook, so only use it in times of extreme emergency. And DO NOT tell anyone. The move works like this: defender thwacks ball up wings to left/right-sided midfielders (using Left C button). Midfielders leg it down the wings and then, with you crossing while holding the R shoulder button down (this keeps the ball low), the ball works its way into the centre. Central striker sticks a foot or head out (B Button) and striker then celebrates, pretending he had no involvement in the overall move whatsoever.

Difficulty: Only if you're blind. The striker finishing the move may experience some problems against the All-Enveloping Men™ who guard England and Italy's goals, but otherwise it's a sure-fire winner.



MOVE D: The Sweeper



Best Formation: 5-3-2

How To: Making full use of your Sweeper, who should generally be a defensive midfielder and thus possess enough ball control to venture out of his own half without contracting the bends, slink your way as far into the opposition half as possible. The further you get, the further your midfield and strikers will spread out and the more options you'll have, while the opposition will be left for dead behind you.

The beauty of this move is that there'll always be at least three players in front of you, with enough defenders to cope with a counter attack, should the move breakdown horribly. So, with your opponents defence at sixes and sevens, measure a ball through to your front players (using Top C) and leg it towards goal. By-passing even the most feisty of goalkeepers shouldn't be a problem as they'll draw towards you when you enter the penalty area. However, if you don't have the confidence to take it past them, your supporting striker will offer the chance for a slide rule cross-box pass. Use the A Button and Analogue Stick to get the logistics right, and then finish the move off via B.

Difficulty: Of course, the whole thing depends on how successfully you can dribble round tackles – the best way is to weave a zig-zag across the pitch. But the further you manage to take your Sweeper up the field, the easier it'll be to finish the move off. The through ball is the key as it dissects the defence without remorse (*and* your striker automatically makes the run), leaving you time to hit the onion bag and start some champagne-led celebrations.



SPORTING CLUB 64

If there's one thing we like here at N64 Magazine, it's brow-moistening multi-player confrontations. And, fortunately, *ISS64* gives us ample opportunity to indulge our tactical brains. But just what exactly do we experts (note: used in the loosest possible way) recommend...?

TIM

Team: South Africa.
Why?: Ancestry. Tim's cloaked in South African culture. His Better Half™ *and* gran are both from sunny SA.
Formation: 5-3-2.
Key Player: Carlton.
WeaverMove™: "Dive in without due care (Left C) and attention and administer a kick to the opponent's spinal chord. Remember, the ball is secondary. *Always* injure the opponent."



JAMES

Team: England.
Why?: Pride. James is never scared to have the three lions stamped to his chest.
Formation: 2-3-5.
Key Player: Keegan.
AshtonMove™: "The defender by-pass. Slip the ball past your opponent (Top C) and, before he has a chance to turn round, you're on towards goal. Of course, I stand no chance of hitting the target because I couldn't hit a cow's backside with a banjo."



JONATHAN

Team: Brazil.
Why?: Because in the vain search for respectability, Jonathan may stand some remote chance of scoring with Brazil. Or, at least, having a shot at goal.
Formation: 4-4-2.
Key Player: Allejo.
DaviesMove™: "Get substituted after fifteen minutes for being so utterly inept."

PAUL

Team: Spain.
Why?: The marriage of perfect close control and gifted individual play was too much for NEW BOY. Or Jarrers. Or 'Roldy. Or Pazza. Or Paul. Or whoever.
Formation: 5-4-1.
Key Player: Sanchez.
JarroldMove™: "Play the ball between two defenders then burst through with lightning-quick pace (hold Bottom C). Obviously only works if Tim doesn't try to decapitate you."

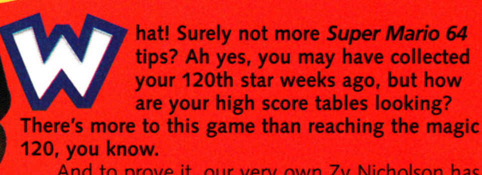


WIL

Team: Mah Jong University.
Why?: Because he *is* – yes, Simon Winterbourne from Hull – a F-R-E-A-K.
Formation: Triple Wan-Kay-See.
Key Player: Yun Poo-Fat from the Mah Jong Grrroooovvvveeee Network.
OvertonMove™: "If you time it just right you can turn... one... of... those... tiles... over... and... win... the... game..." Yawn...

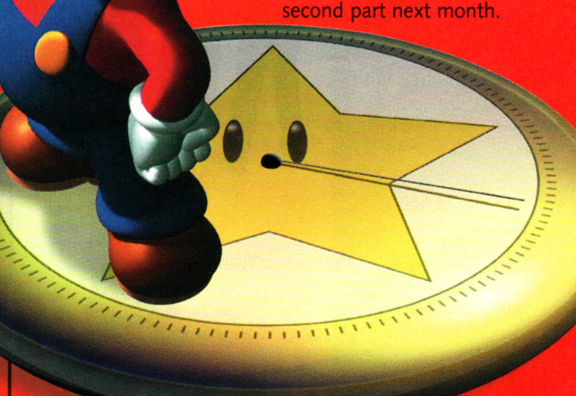


HOW TO... get a 'perfect' high-score on SUPER MARIO 64



What! Surely not more *Super Mario 64* tips? Ah yes, you may have collected your 120th star weeks ago, but how are your high score tables looking? There's more to this game than reaching the magic 120, you know.

And to prove it, our very own Zy Nicholson has written this guide to getting 'perfect' scores on the major levels. It's so comprehensive that we've had to split it in two, and so we'll be running the second part next month.



THE GREAT COIN CHALLENGE

The one piece of information your battery back-up retains beside the Power Star tally is a coin score for each major course. Select the green 'Score' option on start-up, open your best file, and then use the A button to toggle between "My Score" and "Hi Score". Add up all the Hi Scores to compare your performance with ours.

Reckon you're up to the task?

Just as the speed challenge forces you to play the game in a completely different style, so coin collecting will surreptitiously reveal new playing techniques. There are many courses we've failed to perfect after a year with the Japanese cart, so you've still got plenty of room to whip us on individual levels even if your added total doesn't supersede ours. And if you think you've found something we didn't know about, for heaven's sake write in and let us know. We have sparkling **N64** badges to award for the best tips.

COIN STRATEGIES

- Identify trouble spots – blue switch time limits, monsters who perch on narrow ledges, one-chance Shell rides – and go for the hardest coins first, so that you can abandon doomed attempts at the earliest opportunity.
- Learn the location of rejuvenating hearts and deep water. When most of the coins are in your pocket, recovering from accidents and replenishing your health meter isn't as straightforward as usual.
- Some levels defy 100% collection, with unreachable coins and inevitable compromises. Destroying an enemy will produce cash only once, even if the creature itself regenerates in your absence. Our high score includes several perfect totals, but we owe the remainder to some sensible cashing-in after a lucky run.

Seeing a coin roll off into nowhere can be so annoying, especially when you're close to a perfect, that it's worth mentioning this technique again. When you bump a coin !-box from underneath to release its contents, turn the move into a double jump. You'll often catch all the coins in mid-air before they scatter, and at the very least reduce the amount of chasing around on dangerously tight ledges.

The N64 "What, more *Mario*?" high score table

	Course	Total Coinage	N64 Hi-Score
1	Bob-Omb's Battlefield	146	141
2	Whomp's Fortress	141	141
3	Jolly Roger Bay	104	104
4	Cool Cool Mountain	154	153
5	Big Boo's Haunt	151	151
6	Hazy Maze Cave	132	132
7	Lethal Lava Land	131	130
8	Shifting Sand Land	136	132
9	Dire Dire Docks	106	106
10	Snowman's Land	126	126
11	Wet Dry World	152	152
12	Tall Tall Mountain	137	133
13	Tiny Huge Land	192	162
14	Tick Tock Clock	128	127
15	Rainbow Ride	164?	124

PREVIOUSLY IN N64 Last month we showed you how to find 70 stars and 'finish' *Mario* as quickly as possible.

COURSE 1
Bob-Omb's Battlefield

Perfect Rating: 146 Coins

Before entering, set this course to Star 3 or upwards to make sure the small Koopa appears near one of the flowerbeds. He's worth a blue coin in his smalls, and the Shell is a great way to harvest Goombas.

Coin Rings
A hint regarding the coin rings suspended above the floating island. To collect star 5, you'd normally don the Wing Cap and aim the cannon directly at the first centre coin. This time, aim at the periphery and go for the furthest rings first. It's not easy to find missed coins in flight but search around by holding down the left or right C-buttons, locking the camera with the R button when you spot them.

Wooden Posts
You should have discovered this secret from signposts in later levels, but this may still be of benefit to those of you with Japanese import carts. Running around wooden posts three times causes them to erupt in a shower of five yellow coins. There are five such posts on the Battlefield, four in a square around Star 4 and one securing the Chomp's chain (if anyone can explain why this only works sometimes, please tell us). Er, teensy problemette with that last one – you can't get any coins from a post once it's been slammed into the ground. See our Star 6 tip in issue 2.

Goombas
We find Mario's punch/kick combo a little erratic, so our sure-fire tip is to stand near a Goomba and wait to be noticed. When he charges, a brief jump on the spot will crush him as he passes underneath. His coin will then fall directly and agreeably on your head. Unlike previous *Mario* games, there's no bonus for multiple head-stomping. Phooey.

Bob-Ombs
The simplest creatures are also the best, since they can be 'used' offensively or just to blow things up. We've already mentioned the noble art of bomb-baiting, and there's more sport to be had with these creatures here. The persistent shelling from the water cannon anticipates Mario's next position, so a clever player can draw its fire to blow up enemies on the ground. The 'friendly fire' sub-game involves destroying as many bombs as possible, then grabbing their coins as trophies, without you dirtying your hands in combat.

Did you know that Bob-Ombs will also detonate if they run into a cork block? Which they might if they were chasing somebody devious…

COURSE 2
Thwomp's Fortress



Perfect Rating: 141 Coins

Set this course to Star 2 or upwards before entering. There's a 1-Up at the base of the tower that you'll find by punching one of the walls.

Piranha Plants
Although Lakitu teaches you the analogue 'tiptoe' to creep up on slumbering plants, it's the worst method. Holding Z to crawl is faster, and will prevent you from breaking pace. Better still, employ the running dive and save minutes on those speed challenges. Worth a blue coin.

Whomps
The walking slabs are actually worth a full 10 coins if you treat them right. First, step in and out of their faces to prompt a fall. A normal jump onto the Whomp's back will release a yellow coin, up to a maximum of five. When this method is exhausted, butt slam them on the floor for a further five.

Approached from behind with a double jump, it's possible to grab a Whomp's head and climb on top for an amusing little ride.

Cork Blocks
Big blocks must be punched or slammed, and may contain coins. A small block need to be picked up and thrown against a sheer surface and there's a slightly odd physics model that lets you slide it up and down slopes. Both types hold three coins each.

COURSE 3
Jolly Roger Bay

Perfect Rating: 104

Make sure you start this course on at least Star 2, so that you can use the ship's decks to collect three reds. From Star 3 upwards the giant Unagi eel roams freely, though we like to see him out and about on occasion. As that rating suggests, this course is pretty tight on coins – assuming you've got the bonus seventh star, you'll know where they all are.

The Three Spikes
The only set of coins you might miss is a ring formation around the leftmost pinnacle, just below the surface.



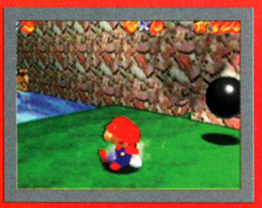
Blue Switch
Swim to the far side of the bay and dive for the submerged entrance to the smuggler's cave. The switch is just inside the entrance, to the right.



GO! GO!

WENDY CRAIG
Admit it, you tried taking a swing at those purple butterflies when you first played the game. Nothing happened. So you probably didn't try it again later, did you? In special places like courses 12 & 13, where they only appear upon being disturbed, punching the butterflies can result in one of two effects. The butterfly becomes a 1-Up mushroom, darting off to inaccessible regions unless you grab it immediately: or it turns into a shiny black bomb, expanding to cannonball size and homing in before exploding dangerously. Feeling lucky?





OUTSIDE THE CASTLE
Ever wondered about those coins under the bridge? When the moat is emptied you can reach them with a reverse somersault followed by a wall kick, loosing a 1-Up mushroom from above when both have been obtained.



You'll also produce a 1-Up mushroom with a handstand on the third tree from the waterfall. Entering and leaving the castle resets the exterior, so this is the game's first 1-Up loop (though it's far from the best one).

COURSE 4
Cool Cool Mountain

Perfect Rating: 154

With 7 stars already collected here, make sure you start the course on the first star. You don't want to be scuppered by any giant penguins!

This is where you're first likely to be frustrated by coins vanishing over ledges, as two of the five Spindrift occupy the approach to Star 6. Don't forget the arrow of coins further on. You'll also need to spin the snowman on the path behind the lower log cabin.



Slide Race
If you include the line above the chimney, there are 82 coins to collect by clearing out the slide race. By pelting through at full speed you'll catch an extra blue coin on the first stretch AND have enough momentum to skirt the inside corners for those difficult yellows. Look out for the first 'drop' in the track where you'll need to jump and follow an arc of coins in the air. Use the warp point to make as many attempts as you need.

Blue
This is on a ledge above the marker for the red coin star, and can be reached from there or by sliding down the outside of the mountain and leaping right at the hairpin. It's worth 10.

Spindrift
These fellows are too slow to pose a threat, but jumping on the petals offers the same high-spinning thrills as the Flyguy. Punches or slide kicks are better to get the three coins.

Snowmen
We're inclined to disagree with the Hotliners on this one. To melt a snowman, we normally employ the technique described for dizzying Mister Eye – except that it takes a much faster, tighter circle and more than one circuit to keep the Snowman from catching up with his loaded snowball. If you have a Koopa Shell to race around him, all the better. Three coins will remain.

Silly Thing
There are times when you've little choice but to cross the rickety bridge patrolled by two bouncing snowmen. When this became yawnsome, we found that you can get past quickly by performing a single triple flip over their heads (the third jump starts between them). A daring stunt indeed, but staying on is a more a test of confidence than your ability to hold a line.

COURSE 5
Big Boo's Haunt





Perfect Rating: 151

Unless you re-enter this course at Star 2 or higher then the mansion stairs will have retracted and you won't find all of the Boos.

With a full house there are no less than 11 Boo Buddies – 6 in the Mansion and five in carousel – at five apiece. Adding up the Scuttlebugs and cork blocks, there are 30 coins outside t.

Boo Buddies
Although you can see their blue coin when Mario looks them in the eye, the ghosts must become tangible before they can be harmed. The kill method we prefer is to face away, backflip or reverse somersault as they close in, then hit Z in mid-air to slam them under butt. At close range you only need a very small jump followed as soon as possible by the Z slam to practically suck them in, and even Big Boos can be hurt this way. Because it doesn't need as much space as circling and diving, it's also the safest thing to use on the balcony.

Scuttlebugs
Often too fast to punch, these orange crawlies still fall for the Goomba trap. Speedsters should master running at them and hitting Z+B for a sliding tackle. Worth three coins.

Mister Eye
The spooky rolling eyeball will launch its marbled projectiles when Mario steps within a certain range. Stop and wait for the pupil to rotate, watching for the blink that indicates a lock-on, then run a close circle around it just once to make Mister Eye collapse. A blue coin is your reward.

Bookends
These snapping, saw-toothed tomes are only found in Big Boo's Haunt, flying from the bookcases when you disturb them. They look pretty mean and have a powerful dive, but all you have to do is jump and touch them as soon as they appear to earn a secret blue coin.

Red Coins
Though the damage is acceptable, you can always use the invulnerability of the Vanish Cap from the adjacent room to snaffle the red coin under the Mad Piano without harm.

Blue Switch
Located in the attic, this switch produces another 20 coins. Don't miss the Boo Buddy here: although he starts behind the Giant Eye's secret panel, you can lure him out without the need for a Vanish Cap.

Silly Thing
Not a treasure-laden course, by any means, but if you triple jump at the outer cage barrier and wall-kick even higher then you'll be able to reach the roof of the shed that houses the elevator down to the carousel. Er, it's only a 1-Up mushroom here, unfortunately.

COURSE 6

Hazy Maze Cave





Perfect Rating: 139 (132)

Theoretically speaking, you could get as many coins as the first number of our perfect rating. In practice, we've yet to see an opportunity to kill a couple of remotely-located bats and we don't believe it's possible to run around the Mister Eye in the furthest corner of the red coin room (although, after much practice, the Eye on the isolated column figures in our Hi Score). Please, prove us wrong!

There are two places where these spindlies regenerate, but you'll only score coins on the first kill. One is near your start: follow our instructions for star 3 to find the other.

Snufit
Although similar to the Flyguy, the masked spitter of Hazy Maze can't move from his post. A Metal Cap is always nearby, so stay invincible and leap into it for two coins.

Swoops
The blue bats of Hazy Maze Cave are more dangerous for their ability to knock you off platforms than for the damage they inflict. Like the Bookends, merely jumping to intercept one is enough to destroy it for a yellow coin.

Gophers
Infinite numbers of irritating little gophers are being bred in those burrows, so you're wasting your time trying to annihilate the species. Their aim may be poor but the knockback from the stones they hurl is equivalent to a Micro-Goomba charge, making it careless to ignore them.

There is one positive bonus for revenge: if you feel the need to wreak havoc, be ready to collect a 1-Up Mushroom as your reward for destroying 8 of them consecutively. In Hazy Mazy Cave, this becomes the simple act of donning a Metal Cap and running back and forth over their holes.

Ceiling Lattice
For handswings on narrow frames try locking the camera or choosing a Mario-cam view. Because you can't move without advancing, it's safest to reach the star ledge and drop off to turn around or long-jump after collecting this coin line above the boulder sinkhole.

Blue Switch
Drop down into the gas, grab the Metal Cap and proceed right to the raised platform. As soon as you hit the switch, head back towards that first green !-box but take the next right passage. The coin trail ends in a column of blue coins, needing a double jump or reverse somersault to catch the highest for a total of 35. There are 52 coins in the maze including critters.

COURSE 7

Lethal Lava Land

Perfect Rating: 133 (131)

More lava than land, but if you enter this course on Star 6 then you'll be able to grab the Koopa Shell and discover Surf City, Satan style. Several banked islands can only be reached with the Shell, and you'll need to spin-kill the far Mister Eye while shredding, but the rest must be done on foot (or Wing Cap, preferably). Aim for 107 coins above the volcano and 24 below.

Concerning our dual rating for this course – just accept that some bombs are likely to throw their coins where you can't reach them, especially inside the volcano, shrug shoulders and continue.

Horned Bob-Ombs
The only way to destroy these little demons is to drown them in lava. If your punches are timed to hit the bomb just before it hits you, you'll knock it backwards. A riskier expert trap is to stand at the platform's edge and jump straight upward when charged (Mario's A, B jump–&-kick offers the necessary timing). As you slide down the bomb's curved back, you'll squeeze it forwards.

A small but helpful insight: each bomb is assigned to patrol a particular area, and when forced off its patch it will attempt to return rather than pursue Mario. Make gradual advances and you can pick them off one by one.

Toy Box
A bouncing crazy-faced box sits on one end of the M-shaped path, and its 5 coins are yours if you use the adjacent bobbing islands as stepping stones. Grabbing the Toy Box as the stones are rising, you can apply stick aftertouch to make the first bounce land on the nearest square, the second on the second, finally smashing to a halt on the platform where the Star 2 boss appears. Easier if you've cleared the bombs first.

Bowser Puzzle
If Mario's standing on the puzzle when it completes itself, five bonus coins will scatter from the centre. Surfers can make a simple hop to ride over the tiles rather than through them.

Heart Restorer
A lava dip inside the volcano needn't be fatal, as you can often guide Mario back onto the spiralling walkway and look for a spinning heart almost camouflaged on that seemingly useless platform beyond the narrow bridge. If you want to see Mario fly without the Wing Cap, try launching him into the base of the lava fall...









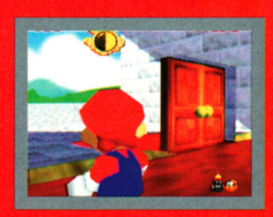
GLITCHES
We start with a small plea. There are plenty of minor glitches to find in *SM64*: it's the downside of such an enormous and complex 3D environment, and none of them will actually crash the game. Most of them are tediously dull, too, so please don't trouble yourself to write in with every little clipping error you discover. We've listed just a couple of major glitches here because they reveal the workings of the game, and can look quite spectacular on first viewing.

BEHIND THE SCENES
At 120 Stars, shoot to the roof and bop yourself a Wing Cap. Wait for the !-box to reappear, then take a couple of steps forward and backflip so that you're standing on top of it. Make three jumps on the spot to launch, fly sharp left and land on the orange tiles of the central tower. If you stay on and keep moving you can actually run vertically up the sheer walls, so trot round to the front face of the tower and pass over the slatted window en route to the spire.

When you hit the right spot Mario will suddenly slip straight through, plummeting down the inside of the tower and landing in a mysterious black box (er, make sure you have full health for this). You're now in the dark space you see behind every door before the screen fades. It gets even weirder if you step through the door from this side. When you want to leave, just backflip over the door.








GO! GO!



COURSE 8

Shifting Sand Land

Perfect Rating: 136

If you enter on Star 1 after completing the course, Klapto the Vulture will be too busy lugging his blue Star around to hassle you. There are 74 coins outside the pyramid and 62 inside, but three tricky flyguys over quicksand make the perfect most unlikely.

Flyguys
This masked red villain demands the establishment of some Video Game Git Of The Year award, just so that he can win it by a clear margin. Hide from a Flyguy and he'll get even nastier, spitting tiny homing fireballs. Normally it's fun to jump on his head when he swoops, whereupon you'll be propelled skyward, and this trick does have vital applications. Coin collectors must settle for a jump-&-kick or risk missing their two coins.

Pokies
The cactus regenerates unless you destroy its head. Punching away segments one-by-one is easiest, and a lobbed bomb will blow it apart. The true speeder uses a reverse somersault to stomp the entire column in one move. Reaps one blue coin.

Blue Switch
Entering the pyramid by the normal access rather than the top, look for this switch inside and to the left as you enter. Its three blue coins appear on a tile in the central sand pit, just over the fence ahead of you.

Life Warp
There's one warp we didn't choose to mention in our speed guide, omitted because it takes you backwards for the sake of a measly 1-Up Mushroom. As you ascend the inside of the pyramid in course 8, use our Shortcut no. 2 and climb the pole to the next tier. In the corner here you'll discover a one-way teleport that drops you on top of an earlier steel lattice. You can easily reach the 1-Up without it but in the interests of completism we believe we've now listed every warp in the entire game. Arguments to the contrary are most welcome.









COURSE 9

Dire Dire Docks

Perfect Rating: 106

With so few coins to collect, it seems there's little to add to last month's tips for the bonus star. If you're still short, you might have missed a line of coins near your entry point. Dive below the surface and swim down to the level where the sloping sides join the vertical wall, then follow the edge around until you see that lovable golden coin sparkle.

The brightly coloured guppy above the vortex seems totally invincible, a mere nuisance to divert the curious mind, and contact with him is just as dangerous as the sharks when rising for air.





COURSE 10

Snowman's Land

Perfect Rating: 126

As long as you can use the cannon shortcut to reach the Koopa Shell (line up with fence, lift cross-hairs to gap in cloud strata – it takes some fiddling and much practice) you won't need to use any of the Spindrifts near the ice ramps as launchers. Meaning that you can punch all of them for their coins instead. As for the one nearest the wall, just jumping out of the water to land on him with Down+A seems to do the trick. Leave the Spindrifts nearest your starting point till the end so that you can return to them for healing when the coins get scarce.

Red Coins

You must have the Koopa Shell to get some of these. The water in this course can burn like lava, so make the most of that shell! Follow the path to the red coins and spin away the snowman for three coins before dropping down to the lake.

Igloo

Even if you lose the Koopa Shell, you can enter here by aiming the cannon at the Giant Snowman and bouncing off one end of his glass bridge; or by jumping from the wooden ledge above the ice ramps. After leaving, slide down the coin-lined slope by which you'd normally climb up here with the Shell. The coins frozen in the icy walls of the maze are easy pickings with the Vanish Cap, but don't miss the three Spindrift and Goombas or the !-box in the Pink Bob-Omb's chamber.

Moneybags

What looks like just another a loose coin in the snow will suddenly become a deadly spring-jawed purse trap. Fortunately the Moneybags will always return to the same spot, so you can learn to knowingly jump on the suspect 'treasure'. Its five coins will scatter wildly when stomped, so try locking the camera far out beforehand.

Amps

More of an irritating obstacle than a foe, there's little you can do but avoid crossing the path of these crackling electric orbs. Nothing is known to destroy them.







LOSE LAKITU

Take the main hall's double doors for the spiral stairs and stand against the left wall, about ten checker tiles in. Perform a double jump and Mario will pull himself up through a shortcut in the staircase. A fairly mundane error, except that Lakitu gets stuck and can't catch up. Without the sneak on his shoulder, Mario is now free to run off and indulge in all of those illicit acts – Cuban cigars, moonies, Italian hand gestures picked up from Bowser in *Super Mario RPG* – forbidden to him while on screen. Ah, if only you knew the pad moves. And could see him.



OOPS UPSIDE

Enter Bob-Omb's Battlefield and run to the very first wooden ramp of the game. Drop underneath, stand in the middle of the coin row and perform a double jump. If you keep the button held on the second jump, you'll grab the underside of the ramp as if it was a lattice ceiling frame. Moving the stick lets you hand-swing along the planks.

It might seem like a deliberate attempt to introduce new players to one of Mario's many talents, this being the first course and all. But if you swing to the lowest end of the ramp and release the button, Mario suddenly 'slips' upward and appears on the topside. It's definitely a glitch, and it lets you play merry hell with that poor, confused Goomba as a bonus.



NEXT MONTH

Courses 11 to 16 are de-coined and we finally call it a day with *SM64*. Or do we...?

The best coin-op games begin life in Japan. So N64 Magazine's man in Tokyo, Max Everingham, was dispatched to the bustling arcades of Shinjuku and Akihabara to sample the machines we'll be playing in a few months' time – and possibly, eventually, with a favourable wind, on our N64s.

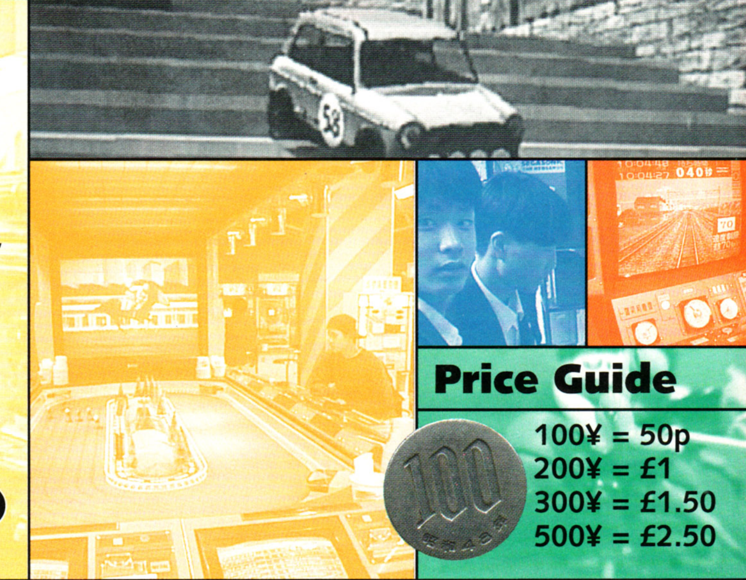
HOW TO... Survive in a JAPANESE ARCADE

Japanese of every age, status and background convene on games arcades when the weekend finally rolls around. And they often don't wait till then, heading in after work (or school) on their way home to play both the familiar... and the bizarre.

The traditional-style racing and fighting games tend to enjoy a high profile in arcades all over Japan, but, thankfully, they're certainly not all that's contending for our 100¥ coins (100¥ being the average price of a single game over here). In fact, the number one game in terms of sales in Japan in recent months has been a curiously-titled quiz game – more of that later.

"What does this have to do with beautiful Nintendo 64?" you may well be asking yourselves. Well, even the most inexperienced gamer will have realised that many of the most successful and durable video games drew their first electronic breath in a coin-operated arcade box. The advent of the super-powered consoles – amongst which our beloved Nintendo 64 reigns supreme, naturally – has led us to expect 'ports' of some of this arcade excellence into our homes.

So dive in and experience the latest delights that the games developers are hoping will coax us into parting with our hard-earned cash. Spend a little time reflecting on how far the games business has come, how fortunate we are now, and how far there could still be to go.



Price Guide

100¥ = 50p
200¥ = £1
300¥ = £1.50
500¥ = £2.50



GTi CLUB

Konami

My first thought when I saw this new racer from Konami was, "Well, here we are, yet another driving game." The cabinet is none too impressive and doesn't exactly scream 'innovation' at you as you plonk yourself down in the bucket seat and dig around for your 100¥ coin. Racing games are two-a-penny just now, and with the likes of *Scud Racer* tearing through the arcades, any new offering is going to have to be a bit special. Thankfully, 'special' is just what Konami's new racer is.**

The first extra becomes apparent as you go through the set-up procedure. Pop the coin in the slot and you're treated to a spinning overview of the town you'll soon be hurtling around in. Given that the setting of the game is the Cote d'Azur, this is all very pretty indeed. All the races take place in the streets of a picturesque coastal town and you quickly realise that you're going to be able to scare the living daylights out of a fair few tourists on your way to victory. An encouraging start.

Your options here are tag race (with up to four players), normal, shortcut race, and shortcut in mirror mode. Make your selection and you're presented with five vehicles to choose from, including a Mini Cooper, a VW Golf and a Lamborghini Countach. In an admirable attempt to instill a few early life lessons, Konami have arranged that, just as a supercar will cost more in real life, in *GTi Club* you have to double your stake and put 200¥ into the machine for the Lambo.

Here come the really interesting features, though. If you've chosen the shortcut race, you can swing off the beaten track at various points and attempt to cut ahead of the pack. One minute you'll be bumping through an olive grove, the next you're careering along a café terrace, scattering terrified tourists.



In tag mode with a friend, the course is cordoned off by means of metal fences and a bomb icon appears over one car, with smaller bomb icons circling the vehicle. You're 'it', and the aim of the game is to chase and tag your opponent. When you do, the bombs shift over to your car and then it's your turn to play chase.

The graphics are of a very high standard, particularly the pre-rendered backdrops of crumbly buildings and Mediterranean coastlines. There are other nice touches, such as mud splattering the car, oncoming traffic, and Sunday drivers pulling out in front of you. There's also a genuine thrill in being able to scream down a narrow alleyway or recreate the stair-descending trick straight out of The Italian Job.

Better than the inclusion of the shortcuts, though, is the hand brake. Not readily apparent when you first slide into the seat, this handle is your ticket to pulling off some quality U-turns. When you're steaming towards a particularly sharp corner, just yank this baby skywards and the car swings neatly around. It's not just 'a bit handy': to navigate some of the tighter bends, it's absolutely essential.

GTi Club provides an entertaining, sometimes exhilarating driving experience, aided immeasurably by the addition of the shortcut feature and the tag mode. It's already giving *Scud Racer* a run for its money in the arcades and places one spot higher than the Sega game in the 'money taken' polls this month.

RATINGS graphics 8 sound 5 gameplay 9 innovation 8

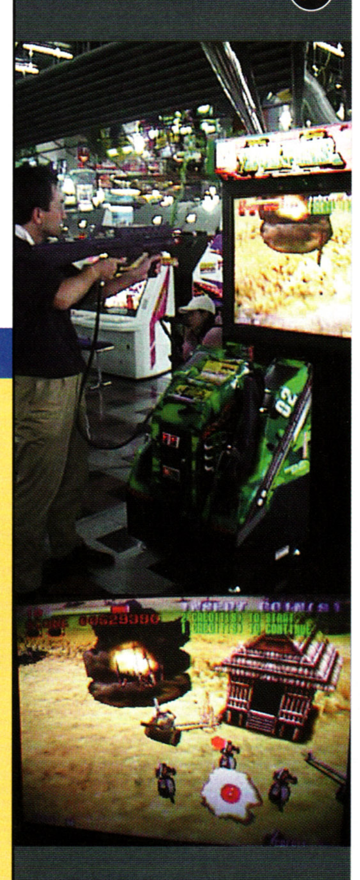
OPERATION THUNDER HURRICANE

Konami



I'm going to make this quick. This is a shooting game with a huge great gun for you to menace innocent passers-by with when you're not pointing it at the screen. Otherwise you just shoot everything you see.

The settings switch after each stage, beginning with a scene straight out of Apocalypse Now, moving on to a Gulf-like desert scenario, and so on. You either love blasting everything to kingdom come, or you don't. Oddly, this game, at 200¥ a shot (sorry), attracts as many young couples as it does wannabee Rambos.



RATINGS
graphics 6 sound 7
gameplay 2
innovation 1



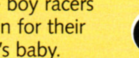
SCUD RACER

Sega

Ah, the long-awaited *Scud Racer*. Let's see. There's no faulting the graphical capabilities of the board in this machine, and AM2 have done a sterling job in creating some highly realistic, nay breathtaking graphics. Typical Sega options abound: four courses, from beginner to expert; four cars to choose from (Porsche 911, Ferrari F40, Dodge Viper and McLaren F1, each with different handling characteristics); four driving views; and a choice of day or night driving.

The lighting effects on the night-time Aztec temple course are wonderful, ranging from a light haze as you pass the waterfall (now required by law in all Japanese driving games, I gather), through bright sunshine climbing the hills, to gorgeous earthy rich golden-brown hues and blazing fires as you rip through the temple. The AI of the CPU-controlled cars is sharp, guaranteeing quite a battle as you strive for glory. And the sense of speed is tremendous. In the F1 (high-speed), you can easily reach a velocity of over 300 km/h. Smoking!

Undeniably, *Scud Racer* is smashing to look at. But where's the beef? You get a couple of minutes of driving, tops, for your 200¥, and there's really nothing to do but steam along, avoiding the other cars. With the likes of *GTi Club* inhabiting the same buildings, *Scud Racer* seats are often left waiting for their next bum, while the Japanese boy racers give the Minis a run for their money on Konami's baby.





RATINGS graphics 9 sound 6 gameplay 4 innovation 6







TOP SKATER

Sega

Surf's up! One look at the machine and you'll correctly surmise that it's another of those games based on a board with no wheels.

But what a game! See those ruddy great grab bars on around the cabinet? Well, grab them, because after coughing up your 200¥ and going through the usual run of options (course-type, length, choice of six characters with names like Ken-ta and Ash) the crashing surf music fires up to blast the cobwebs out of your lug-holes and you're hurled down the start ramp into the crazy world of extreme sports.

The board you stand on is made of hard moulded plastic. And a good job too because, apart from the swishy movements you use to steer, the primary method of control is to stamp on either end of it in order to pull off the stunts which reward you with time bonuses and extra points. The average game time is about three minutes, or less if you keep eating dirt or missing the time-ups.

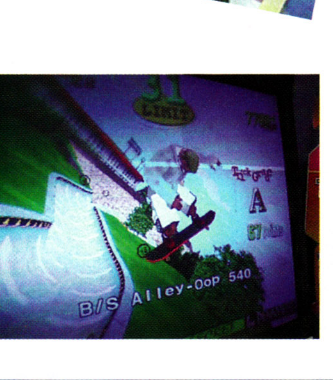
You navigate a concrete-wave-type skateboard course, but aren't confined to it. A few well-timed (or laughably miscalculated, in my case) jumps will allow you to get some serious air by leaving the pipe altogether and hanging with the birds. When this happens, the game camera tracks you, resulting in some mind-blowing angles guaranteed to throw off even the hardened riders.

The most fun, however, lies in pulling off the stunts. Loops, spins, tail and nose grabs, alley-oops and air walks are all available, and then there are the more oddly-named ones such as 'b/s mute', 'f/s 540' and 'back loop to method'. I was just trying to stay upright and not look completely foolish in front of the surf dude kids who were gathered around watching me.

The position of the time-up rings usually entails leaving the safety of Mother Earth, if just for a second or two, which is a neat way of encouraging players to take a few risks, significantly increasing the thrill of the ride. Sound effects are minimal, with the odd 'Oh man!' thrown in when you miss a jump, and the music is the kind of crashing surfer rock anthem you'd expect from a game like this.

Top Skater is a cracking game and, while it's too new for me to know if it will become top dog, it's far and away the most excitement I've had from an arcade game for some time. It blows the socks off the ski games and, like *GTi Club*, it aims to be fun rather than an ultra-realistic simulation.







RATINGS graphics **8** sound **7** gameplay **9** innovation **7**



ALPINE RACER 2

Namco

The sequel to this top ski game is in just about every arcade I've been in, joining the likes of *GTi Club, Top Skater* and *Scud Racer*. Quite why, though, I have no idea. Improvements include a new course, a choice of skiing styles, and the ability to race against a pal on a neighbouring machine. Choose your skier, go for a slalom or high speed run, and get ready to hit the slopes.

I played the original machine in London's Trocadero quite a while back now, and the new one plays just the same. Same controls, same graphics, same tired old touches like a helicopter appearing right in front of you as you gain the ridge (*Ridge Racer*, anyone?). There's a good sense of speed, and some beautiful views, but, and I have to say this, it just isn't very interesting. You start at the top, and go down to the bottom. Hmmm. The only thing of note is that there's a (documented) cheat* in this game which allows you to choose a bear, or two old men on one pair of skis, as your character. Doesn't save it from Yawn City, though.



* *Hold the L+R yellow buttons down when you put your money in, choose the style, and press R button twice. The bear is yours. For the old m press the L button twice at the second step.*

RATINGS graphics **6** sound **3** gameplay **4** innovation **1**



PRINT CLUB

Various developers

There are a few sights which strike you when you first arrive in Japan. But none is more immediately impressive, one way or another, than the apparently endless hordes of tanned, short-skirted (with belts, often), mobile-phone-carrying high school girls.

These creatures can be seen walking and chatting together in large groups all over the city at all times of the day. Not only do they seem to be everywhere you look, but their uniforms, their hairstyles and their penchant for ostentatiously adjusting their make-up in public places raise their profiles to a level that's impossible to ignore. (Well, that's my excuse.)

It's hard work getting to look this good, so what could be more natural than the desire to record the look for posterity in the form of tiny photo-stickers, and then distribute them among your friends? Enter *Print Club*! These little beauties (the machines) allow you to capture the lovely vision that is you against the backdrop of your choice for the bargain price of 300¥. Selectable frames, applied afterwards, feature the likes of Snoopy, Felix the Cat, Mickey Mouse or even your favourite celebrity. After a few button pushes (see instructions to the right), the machine delivers a sheet of 16 sticky-backed photographs - called 'seals' in Japan – which you can then display to the adoring world at large. Next to most machines there's a special notice-board where you can stick a sample for future visitors to goggle at.





ARMADILLO RACING

Namco

Brand new in the arcades is the fast-paced, endearingly wacky *Armadillo Racing* from Namco. Your objective is to complete two laps within 60 seconds.

Control could hardly be simpler. The trackball makes a welcome return to the arcades, operational over a 180 degree foward arc. All you do is frantically palm the ball forwards and the animal gallops off after his mates.



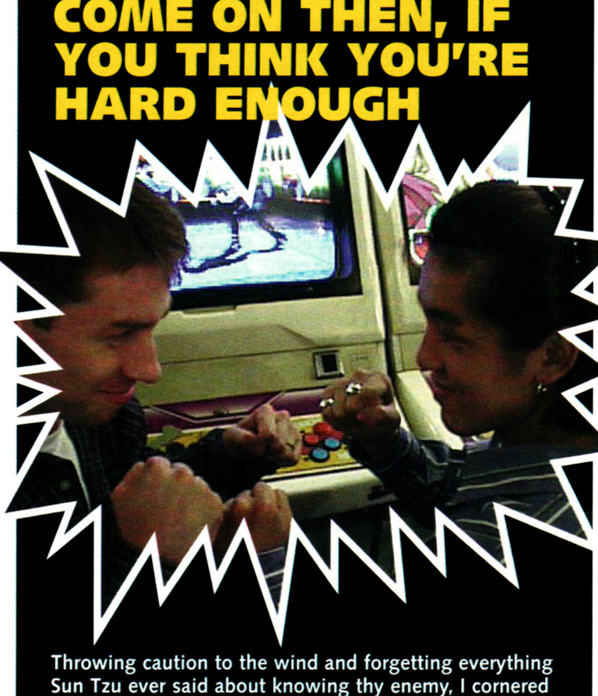
The two courses run over banked dirt tracks, down cobbled-stone paths, along wooden walkways and across bridges. Fall off a bridge and you tumble into the water, forcing your armadillo to paddle to the bank, drag himself out and shake his body free of water. Actually, 'he' could be a 'she' – it's so hard to tell with armadillos.

Hit one of the boulders which litter the obstacle course or run into a pig and you curl up and spin like a hedgehog. There's an odd, pink heart icon on the screen. If you get carried away with the trackball, the heart changes to red which basically means you're about to give your beasty a coronary. A blue bar underneath indicates your speed.

The graphics are of a very high standard, but that's not really what this game's about – it's more to do with good, light-hearted fun. This is reflected in the varied gamers attracted to the machine, from young nippers to street-wise high-school kids and sharp-suited businessmen. It's a great laugh, if nothing else. My only complaint is that 60 seconds is a bit too short for 200¥.

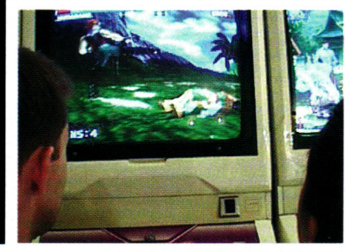
RATINGS graphics **7** sound **5** gameplay **8** innovation **9**

COME ON THEN, IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH



Throwing caution to the wind and forgetting everything Sun Tzu ever said about knowing thy enemy, I cornered one of the Otaku in a downtown arcade and rashly challenged him to a *Tekken 3* best of three deathmatch. Considering that my last adventure of this kind resulted in a sound thrashing at the hands of a kid who couldn't have been more than seven years old, this was folly indeed. Still, too late now...

Heh! Heh! You and whose army?



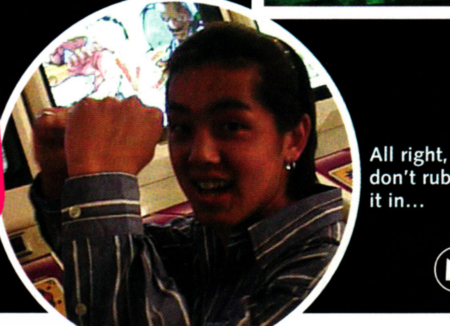


Ah, right you are then.





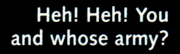
Hey! I wasn't ready!



All right, don't rub it in...

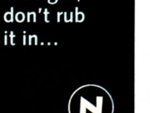
Print Club is massively popular here, and at the weekend every machine in sight (they're dotted all over the place in shopping malls, train stations, cafés and video stores, as well as in arcades) boasts long, long lines of chirpy high schoolers eagerly awaiting their turn to produce this week's batch of seals. True devotees can even buy dedicated albums to store their collection in. No, really.





TEN STEPS TO STARDOM

Ichi step Adjust hair. Check make-up. (Essential.)
Ni step Step behind curtain and jockey into position.
San step Insert 300¥.
Shi step Select seal style. Discuss choice. De-select seal style. Select another one...
Go step Select frame. Discuss choice. De-select...
Roku step Pose.
Shichi step Hit 'freeze' button to capture image.
Hachi step Laugh uproariously. Strike friend for closing eyes or looking in wrong direction. Hit button to unfreeze image. Pose. Hit freeze button. Laugh uproariously. Strike friend... (This step can be repeated for some time.)
Kyu step Wait for 2-3 minutes while machine does its stuff.
Ju step Collect stickers. Use scissors attached to side of machine. Distribute.





GO! GO!



DENSHA DE, GO! (LET'S GO BY TRAIN)

Taito

Taito have granted the wish of the little boy inside each of us with their new game, *Densha de, Go!*, where the player finally gets to realise the dream of being a train driver.

And the excitement doesn't stop (*Start, surely?* – James) there. On the facia is a set of controls which could easily be mistaken for the real thing, while up on the screen you're treated to as accurate a representation of Japan Railways (JR) as could ever want to imagine.

Odd that the Japanese, who nearly all suffer the assorted indignities of a long train-commute to work every morning packed in like cattle, should take this game to their hearts. The queues of thirtysomething men waiting patiently for their turn to play just go to show that the train occupies a very special place in many of our minds. But then, with trains that are always on time (barring accidents), and the Shinkansen (that's Bullet Train to you, guv) capable of speeds in excess of 350 km/h in airline-like comfort, the Japanese are justifiably proud of their rail system.



RATINGS graphics **9** sound **6** gameplay **4** innovation **7**

PACHINKO

If you don't smoke, don't go into a Pachinko parlour – the first thing you'll notice is the billowing cloud of smoke hanging menacingly from the ceiling. If you are a smoker, on the other hand, leave your fags at home and inhale for free.

Pachinko parlours are an odd sight. Imagine row upon row of grim-faced individuals sitting on tiny plastic seats, staring fixedly at flashing, beeping panels that look like a fruit machine crossed with a pinball table, and you pretty much have the basics.

The machines them-selves are entirely auto-mated, and they work something like this: ball-bearings are introduced into the top where they then make their way through a maze of projecting pins arranged in a pattern on the surface of the (upright) table. As the balls progress southwards, reels such as you find on fruit machines (but in LED or graphic format) spin to provide bonus options. The reward comes when you cause the silver balls to enter a 'goal' area located towards the bottom of the table. And the reward is more silver balls.

The only interaction on the part of the player is at the beginning. Through the manipulation of a, um, knob, you can affect the velocity and trajectory of each ball as it's released into play. That's it. Don't go thinking that this is easy – aficionados swear there's a considerable degree of skill involved in turning this knob.

Every parlour has more bouncers than your local Ritzy, and if you're not the kind who likes a drink, a smoke and to spend your day off in a noisy aircraft hangar in your shell suit and slippers watching machines play with themselves, be prepared to be disappointed.



CHARACTER SELECT

If you fancy a multi-player game of *GTi Club*, *Alpine Racer 2* or *Operation Thunder Hurricane*, you'll need to choose an opponent from the crowd to challenge.



Pocket Bell Girl



sex	Female
height	1.53m
weight	51kg
blood type	A
fighting style	Giggly
stance	Cute
habitat	Coffee shops, shopping malls

Surf Bloke



sex	Male
height	1.66m
weight	64kg
blood type	A/B
fighting style	Aggressive
stance	Laid back
habitat	Video store steps, 7-11

Betting Man

sex	Male
height	1.65m
weight	78kg
blood type	O
fighting style	Relaxed
stance	Near Horizontal
habitat	Pachinko parlours, race course

Getalife Geezer



sex	Male
height	1.79m
weight	85kg
blood type	B
fighting style	Limp wristed
stance	Hunched
habitat	Vicinity of *Toki Meki* machines

MY ANGEL CHILD CARE QUIZ

Namco

Look, don't start. This deserves a mention because it's, incredibly, the number one arcade machine in Japan this month. (Rated by sales, that is – punters who've partaken.)

While you might expect the only people to play this one to be young mothers, there just aren't that many of them around. (Remember what I said about single women?) The name is misleading, though, because, despite the display showing a couple of anime babies frolicking around as you



play, it is in fact a straight-forward general knowledge quiz game. So I haven't gone soft.

RATINGS graphics **Er, right** sound **N/A** gameplay **8** innovation **1**

HORSE RACING GAMES

Horse-racing games have found their way into arcades and while many of them inhabit the regular arcade cabinets, some of them aim a bit higher.

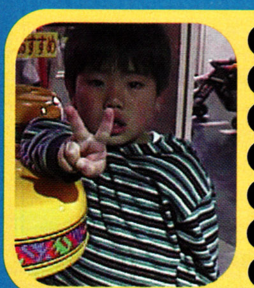
The game pictured here recreates the action in three ways: on the table-top, where plastic horses glide around a grooved replica of the race course; on a computer-graphic display of the same; and as 'real-life' video footage synched with the game.

As there's a ban on betting, you use 'medals' to place your bets. You buy these in 100¥ units from the arcade staff, but can't later exchange them for money or anything else.



Family Man

sex	Male
height	1.80m
weight	78kg
blood type	O
fighting style	None
stance	None
habitat	UFO catcher machines, home



Sprog

sex	Male
height	1m
weight	35kg
blood type	A/B
fighting style	Nippy
stance	Low
habitat	Everywhere

TOKI MEKI MEMORIAL

Konami/Various



Judging by the number of people waiting for a go on this machine (or rather, machines, as everyone is getting in on this particular act), *Toki Meki Memorial* is one of the most popular game in Japanese arcades.

'Toki Meki' very roughly translates as 'heartfelt love', and the 'memorial' part is a kind of Japlish which should have been 'souvenir', since the sole purpose of playing the myriad machines that make up the *TM* collection is to walk away with a trinket emblazoned with the 'anime' (manga cartoon-style) girls' images *(Actually, 'Toki Meki Memorial' is the name of the high school the girls attend in Konami's phenomally sucessful date-sim video game of the same name – it was the best selling title on the PlayStation in 96! – Wil)*

Some machines are pot-luck jobs and dole out badges, posters, stickers and plastic dolls, while others, including Konami's brand new *Toki Meki Memorial* machine, are slightly more elaborate affairs. And I mean only slightly. Here, you place your left hand on the sensor (pictured) and operate the buttons with your right, first selecting which girl you want to hit on and then responding to her on-screen questions. The sensor goes to work and helps decide whether the girl's heart and yours 'agree', in which case your heartfelt love (Toki Meki) percentage increases. Leave a negative impression, however, and your life meter takes a knock. At the end of it all, you can opt to have a print out of your results and a picture of your new woman.

In a country where 70% of 20-30-year-old women remain single, you'd think the droves of young and middle-aged men who flock to these machines might make better use of their time.

Unfathomable as its appeal may seem to some of us, *Toki Meki* memorial paraphernalia is everywhere you look. No game store is without a section given over entirely to displays of *TM* kit, as if what's in the machines wasn't enough. There's even one gentleman who recently made the news here after claiming to be so devoted to one *Toki Meki* character that he had his futon printed on one side with a full-length image of her so that he can lay down beside her to sleep. At least, I hope he sleeps…



CATCHINGER Z
Namco
100¥ in the slot, *Toki Meki* doll falls through the hole above the robot's head, and you hit the button to make the robot's arms clash together. If you catch the box, the doll is yours. The sole preserve of young and middle-aged men. Hmm.

TOKI MEKI DISC COLLECTION
Konami
This is one of the simpler ones. Stick 100¥ in the slot, hit the big red button to set the lights going, and hit it again to start the slowdown/stopping sequence. If the lights stop in one of the four spaces inside the heart, you win. A badge.





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You're through to... THE NINTENDO

If you're stuck with a game, the Nintendo Hotline are always there to help you out. They even do this page of tips for us – not because we pay them, just because they're nice. Ahhhh...

This month on the Hotline we've mostly been playing the Japanese version of *Starfox 64*, preparing for the lines to be jammed when it comes out here later in the summer. Mostly. Some people (and we won't name names) have been running about with their arms stretched out with huge white scarves billowing from around their necks. Others have been crouched underneath their desks, no doubt wondering what their purpose in this somewhat confusing life is.

All in all, though, it's been a pretty exciting month for all of us. With the ever-expanding selection of N64 software hitting these shores, there's something for everyone now, and the only problem left is who gets the next go.

Here, though, are the questions that've been cropping up this month...

WHAT IS THE NINTENDO HOTLINE?

We're a team of expert games players who use our vast knowledge of all things Nintendo to help gamers in distress. Staff selection is very strict, so you can always be confident that when you talk to a councillor, they are one of the finest gamesplayers in the country and the perfect coach for your gaming skills.

Open seven days a week, 365 days of the year, the Hotline deals with over 2,000 calls a day, spread over the various Nintendo platforms. To guarantee that your call will be answered quickly and your problem answered swiftly, we have doubled our staff and increased our weekend opening hours.

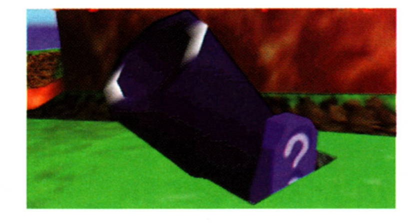
Call us on **(01703) 652222** (NOT a premium rate number) and pose your game questions. We should be able to provide you with the answers, whether they're directions, cheats, passwords or simple advice. The Hotline is open Monday to Friday 12pm to 8pm, and Saturday and Sunday 10am to 6pm.

PROBLEMS...

This month the top ten questions to the Hotline have been...

Q On *Mario 64*, I don't understand the 'Blast Away the Wall' clue for the sixth star.

A This is still giving people problems (seriously!), so here's the solution. Drop into the cannon and aim yourself at the tall wall over-hanging the water (the one with the wooden platform spinning round on top). Shoot yourself out at the top right-hand corner of the wall, which will break away to reveal the star!



Q Star 6 of Course 1, Bob-Omb Battlefield, is giving me hassle! I can't get the star from behind the cage!

A Right then, there's a simple method to doing this. Wait near the Chain Chomp who's tied down next to the cage. When he lunges in to chomp you, wait until the chain snaps taut and then dash in and butt-slam the wooden post he's chained to. Repeat this technique three times to release the Chain Chomp, who will bash his way through the cage on the way to escape!





Q On *Shadows of the Empire*, I can't get across the chasm in Gall Spaceport – the jet pack always runs out of fuel.

A Yeeesss... The idea here is to let the jet pack refuel by landing on the stone pillars that are placed at convenient intervals throughout the chasm. You'll find that shooting enemies before you start flying will give you a trouble-free flight! Always let the jet pack refuel to 100% before attempting the next leg of your journey.



Q On *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*, I've found a cave in Level 2 with a Minigun and some Tek Armour behind some rocks. How do I get them out?

A In order to break through those rocks, you're going to need the Grenade Launcher which is first found on Level 4.

☎ (01703) 652222

HOTLINE

Q How do you get the Gallery cheat to work on *Turok?*

A This cheat only works if you enter it on the title screen. You can't access it from within the game.



Q I'm stuck in the Ruins on *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*. I can't find the Chronosceptor Piece!



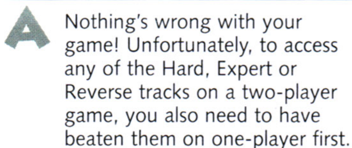
A This is the one that everyone misses. At the end of the level, before you go through the portal that takes you to the bosses, jump over to the far left-hand pillars that lead down along the left side of the platform. Jump down to the bottom pillar and look at the left-hand wall. There are vines that lead up to the top of the wall. Jump over to the vines, climb to the top, and claim the Chronoscepter!

Q My friend has got loads more points than me on the stunt courses on *Wave Race 64* and he won't tell me how to do it.



A To get a really high score in the stunt mode, press Start to pause the game just as you finisha stunt. The announcer should keep talking. Now unpausethe game and continue the course, and when you cross the finishing line, you should be awarded hundreds of points for free! Failing that, slap your friend with a wet fish until he agrees to stop cheating, the rascal.

Q I'm trying to access the courses on *Wave Race 64* in the two-player game but they aren't available! What's gone wrong?



A Nothing's wrong with your game! Unfortunately, to access any of the Hard, Expert or Reverse tracks on a two-player game, you also need to have beaten them on one-player first.

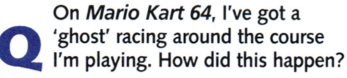


Q On Koopa Troopa Beach on *Mario Kart 64*, I want to know how to get into the hole in the side of the mountain?



A To get through the mountain shortcut, you need to have a Super Mushroom as you approach the ramp leading into the hole. It takes good timing and a steady hand to get through the gap but it will shave valuable seconds off your time.

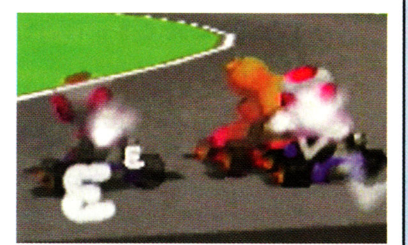
Q On *Mario Kart 64*, I've got a 'ghost' racing around the course I'm playing. How did this happen?





A Certain courses have their own ghost riders, activated by beating a time on each course. The (import) times to beat are:

Mario's Raceway	1'30"00
Luigi's Raceway	1'52"00
Royal Raceway	2'40"00



HOTLINE TIPS

Game secrets from the Hotline chaps.

MK TRILOGY Cheats and Codes

Play as Human Smoke
On the Character Select screen, select Robot Smoke. After selecting Robot Smoke, press and hold Back, High Punch, High Kick, Block and Run on the controller. You must be holding all of these buttons before the match begins.



Kombat Zone Select
On the Character Select screen, highlight Sonya, then press Up and Start. You will hear an explosion if you entered the code correctly.

Play as Motaro
Chose any character, then before the match begins, press and hold Back, High KicK and Low Kick. You must be holding all of these buttons before the match starts. You can continue to play as Motaro if you re-enter the code in the 2nd round and do not select Tournament Outcome. This code will only work on Jade's Desert and the Wasteland Stage.

Play as Shao Kahn
Choose any character, then before the match begins, press and hold High Punch, Low Punch and Down on the control pad. You must be holding all of these buttons befoer the match starts. You can continue to play as Shao Kahn if you re-enter the code in the second round and do not select Tournament Outcome. This code only works on the Kave, Pit 3 and the Rooftop.

Secret Endurance Mode
On the character select screen, highlight Kano and press Down and Start.

Secret Options Menu code (Menu 1&2)
On the Attract Mode Screen, quickly press Block, High Kick, Low Kick, Run, Low Punch, High Punch, High Punch, High Punch, Low Punch, Low Punch. When you enter this code correctly, you hear the words "Uh-Huh".



Secret Options Menu 1
"More Kombat"
Level Select On/Off
Throwing Enabled/Disabled
Unlimited Runs Enabled/Disabled
Bloody Kombat On/Off
Smoke On/Off
Khameleon On/Off

Secret Options Menu 2
"Kombat Cheats"
Free Play On/Off
Fatality Time On/Off
Collision Boxes On/Off
One Round Matches On/Off

Unlimited Continues
On the Attract Screen, quickly press Down, Down, Up, Up, Right, Right, Left, Left.

GO! GO!



TIPS EXTRA

The Readers Top Ten Tips is back in all its full-length glory, and this month there's not one but two High Scores to beat. Jonathan's not too confident about his *Mario Kart* time, though...

NEW HIGH SCORE!

There's no doubt about it, *Mario Kart 64* is the challenge game of the month and we want to see if you can beat our best time on Mario Raceway. We've already seen some pretty impressive times for the Japanese and American versions of the game (check out I'm the Best on page 80) but this time, only Pal gamers are alowed to enter.

If you can beat our time (below) send some photographic evidence of your acheivement to:

N64 Magazine
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW.



We'll print the best time next month and reward the winner with a fine Sharkpad Pro 64 joypad from Interact (01202 862 0265). Runners-up will be entered into the 'I'm the Best' league table in Club 64.

THIS MONTH'S SCORE TO BEAT:



Mario Kart 64 (PAL version)
Mario Raceway 01'40"27

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64
(Konami)



ALL-STAR TEAMS
On the title screen, hold Z and press Up, L, Up, L, Down, L, Down, L, Left R, Right, R, Left, R, Right, R, B, A and Start. If you hear a cheer, you should now have access to six all-star teams from around the world.

TUROK
(Acclaim)



THE BIG CHEAT
At the password screen enter: NTHGTHDGDCRTDTRK.
This will give you all the cheats previously available as codes including the anticipated warps and level skips!

DOOM
(Midway)

THE REALLY BIG CHEAT
At the password screen enter: W93M 7H2O BCYO PSVB
This code will give you 100 health, 200 armor, all weapons, full ammo, the backpack, levels 29-31 finished, and takes you to the final level in the game. (In fact, you hardly need to play the game at all! Er...) Anyway, on top of all that, you'll also get the three pentagram items that make



your laser three times as powerful and enable you to use the three switches in the last level as well as closing the gates that spawn the monsters.

FIFA 64
(Electronic Arts)



SOUND EFFECTS
If you're lucky enough to score a goal in *FIFA 64*, during the player's celebrations, try fiddling around with the C Buttons. You should find that the Top C is a horn, Left C is the crowd yelling, Bottom C a drum and Right C a man shouting "Goal!"

STARFOX 64
(Nintendo)

TANK 4-PLAYER
To the four-player tank mode (and the Graphic Equalizer function), achieve medals on all 15 levels. To do this, you'll need to beat the stage with a specific number of hits and keep all of your comrades alive. The scores needed to achieve a medal on each level are:

EASY PATHS	
Corneria	150
Asteroid Belt	200
Ficcina	50
Sector X	150
Titania	150
Volus	150
Venom (Easy)	200
MEDIUM	
Katalina	150
Solar	100
Macbeth	150
HARD	
Sector Y	150
Aquas	150
Zoneth	250
Sector Z	100
Area 6	300

TURN OFF CROSS-HAIR
If, for some reason, you'd like to turn off the aiming cross-hairs in *Star Fox 64*, simply press start and then R. The square should now disappear.

SECTOR Z POWER-UP
If you're getting low on energy when you arrive at Sector Z you can fly into the rear hangar of your mother-ship for an energy bar fill-up. As well as this power boost you'll also be able to enjoy one of *Starfox 64's* superb real time cut scenes.

OLD HIGH SCORE!

Just a reminder – we're still waiting for challengers to Jonathan's score of 156 hits on level 1 (Corneria) of *Starfox 64*. The best photographed score will get a memory pack from Blaze (01302) 751428 and a 55-in-one Key Chain. Send your entries to the usual address.



READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

More of you tips to sift this month than ever before – although beating Zy and his *Mario 64* knowledge is a tall order for all but the most dedicated gamer. In fact, it's probably now impossible. Big head.

There's still plenty to find for other games, though, and even some tactical stuff (like Adrian Whiteley's *Mario Kart* tip, below) is finding its way in. If you want the chance to win a Sharkpad Pro pad from Interact (01202 8620265) for the number one tip, fill in the coupon below and make James's day. You'll earn yourself an exclusive **N64** pin badge for a top-ten finish.















1 Doom 64
I noticed from your review that you hadn't managed to find level 30 on *Doom 64*. To get here you need to play level 12 as normal, except when you come to the Blue Supercharge sphere and jump over to collect it, take a look at the map. You should see that the wall opposite you has a mysterious red line on it. If you run towards this wall (ie, jump) you'll find yourself in a secret room with a special level exit. This exit will take you to Level 30 as well as powering-up your alien laser weapon to give you three-shot power.
Paul Kirby, St Helens

2 Mario Kart 64
On the Yoshi Valley circuit, collect three red shells, let them spin around you and then park just in front of the giant Yoshi egg. The CPU drivers will run into you, fly into the air, hit the egg, get 'doormatted' and then spend 10-20 seconds to float to the canyon floor. Well it made me laugh the first few hundred times.
Adrian Whiteley, Wakefield

3 Pilotwings 64
You can play a mini game of 'chicken' with Missi. Fly from Cape Canaveral up the road, past the gas station to the lake with the big dam and a big pink Missi in it. If you fly straight at her (aim for her forehead, be ruthless) you'll bounce off and get propelled into the air. The game is to see how long you can stay in the air wihout using your boosters, the danger being that you'll crash if you leave things too late. My record is around 11.2 seconds.
Jon Davies, Wallingford

4 Turok
Face a downward-sloping ceiling, hold Top C to run towards it and when you are below it, hold R as well. This will make Turok grab the ceiling and slide down. This can most easily be done at the start of Level 5.
Daniel Glenfield, Abingdon

5 Shadows of the Empire
To defeat Slave 1 at the end of Gall Spaceport, simply stand still and wait for the ship to come to you (you might take a couple of hits). If you now stand beneath the front-mounted guns and aim up with Z, you'll beable to blast away in total safety.
Ray Gomes, Ashford

6 Turok
At the password screen, enter: CLLTHTNMTN to get the 'Quack' mode.
Sam Pugh, Crawley

7 Super Mario 64
On Shifting Sand Land, I've found a warp that was not listed in your guide. Inside the pyramid, on the first pole you have to climb try and jump off into the left corner. The warp here will take you to an extra life.
Richard Elliot, Wellesbourne

8 Wave Race 64
On Glacier Park, turn just before you hit the large ice sheet – this should start you skidding sideways. Now, just as you pass the beginning of the ice, do the sequence that pulls of the backward flip (Forward, then hold Back). The longer you hold back the better your stunt score will be. My best is 10,000 – not bad for a single stunt. (This stunt can also be performed on Drake Lake's weed-covered sand bank.)
Daryl Malpass, London

10 Turok
Lead a Raptor into the path of a Dimetrodon (green lizard-like dinosaur with spikey back) and the two will fight, resulting in the death of the Raptor. OK, so it isn't that useful but it does save you ammo and it's fairly entertaining.
Giles Callingham, Diss

YOUR TOP TIP

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret bit or quirky thing to do in one of your games? Then send it to us immediately! Each month we'll compile a chart of the best and if you make it in, we'll send you out a rather flash **N64** pin badge. If you get the coveted Number 1 slot we'll send you something just a little bit special. Don't send us stuff we've already printed, though, it makes James cross.

HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

It's for [game name]:

And I've found that if you:

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

....

....

Post code ....

Send to: Tips Extra, **N64** Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW
If you don't want to cut up your magazine send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.

N64



Hello there, readers! If my mailbag keeps expanding at this rate I'll have to start a separate magazine to accomodate it all. It could be called 'Post Today', with the line 'Don't delay!' above the logo. Meanwhile, however, here're some people disagreeing with our reviews. Tch, eh?

Write to us at:
Club 64, **N64** Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
Fax: 01225 732275
e-mail: n64@futurenet.co.uk
Any letters printed win a prized N64 Magazine badge!



"My pet parrot"

I recently wrote to *So Tell Me This...* about Nintendo 64 games. The next day my sister came home holding a Nintendo 64 with *Super Mario 64* and *Shadows of the Empire*. I was amazed. She'd borrowed it from her boyfriend and was looking after it while he went to Korea.

Anyway, there I was playing *Shadows* with my pet parrot, Billy, watching, when I suddenly decided to go and play on my SNES. When I returned I was horrified to find that Billy had bitten through the controller wire! I now have to sell all my SNES games to replace it! I think Nintendo should make pet-proof control pads.
Mark Wood, Caister-on-Sea

Maybe he didn't like the Mos Eisley level. **Ed**

"I love him"

I know I only have two weeks to live, so I've given my boyfriend my N64 and PlayStation. I love him very much and hope he likes them.

I'm sure he'd like your magazine, as Wil Overton and Zy Nicholson are in it, and they were in *Super Play* (a magazine which he has every issue of and treasures more than me).

I just wondered if Japanese games work on the Hong Kong machine, and also American games. And do British memory cards work with a Japanese controller?

And why's Wil a Japanese freak? Just like my boyfriend! Anything Japanese and he's over the moon. But that's why I love him. And I'll keep the ring on my finger.
Jessica Lau, Hong Kong

How disturbing. Regarding the Hong Kong machine bit, Japanese games will work on a Hong Kong machine, but you'll need a bridge adaptor for American ones. And we haven't had any problems interchanging N64s, controllers, memory cards and other bits and pieces from around the world, concluding that there are no internal differences between them. **Ed**

N64 "CRAP"?

I'm a big fan of your mag, but I'm writing to tell you how crap I think the new N64 is. I bought one on the day it came out thinking it would be great, but I was wrong. The graphics are all blurred, the sounds are duff and the lastability of the games is abysmal. I haven't played on *Pilotwings* since I bought the machine, and I haven't played *Wave Race* since I bought that. I swapped *Shadows* because it's like playing on a £5 pocket game. *Mario* is good but it's very over-rated, and *Turok's* a quality game but it's the only true 64-bit one. Please leave *FIFA* alone because it's the only footie game out unless you want to pay around £100. If Nintendo don't start making games of the same quality the N64 will be a flop.
Paul McDermott, Manchester

When the hell are Nintendo going to make some decent games? All right, we may have *Mario* and *Turok*, but, come on, the rest are crap. They've made some great games for the SNES, but none for the N64. *Mario Kart* and *ISS64* may be coming out soon, but what else? When are some decent games coming out? If you know, please tell me and all the other readers.
Graham Hodkinson, Liverpool

Blimey. A couple of heart-felt letters, there, even if they are entirely out of step with all the other ones we've got. Any of our other noble readers care to comment? **Ed**

"Basketball fans"

I have a minor problem. It's with the review of *NBA Hangtime* in **N64**/1. You gave it 52%, even though you said it was the best arcade basketball game in the world, and said you'd rather play a decent football game. Next time, could you write the review from the perspective of someone who's interested in basketball, as they're more likely to buy the game. If you can't do this, maybe you could give the game two scores, one for basketball fans and one for those who aren't.
Gareth Gibson, Rickmansworth

The **N64** *reviews team comprises experts in just about every area of N64 gaming, from RPGs to beat-'em-ups to – for Pete's sake – mah jong. But, no matter how much we asked around, we couldn't find anyone who regularly enjoys basketball games. So all we were able to do was play the game thoroughly and mark it according to how much we enjoyed it – not, unfortunately, a lot. To mark it "from the perspective of someone who's interested in basketball" – i.e. lie – just wouldn't be right. Taking that approach to its logical conclusion we'd mark* Mortal Kombat Trilogy *from the perspective of someone who likes* Mortal Kombat *games, and* Cruis'n USA *from the perspective of someone who likes really crap driving games, and conclude every review with the line: "If this is the sort of thing you like, then you'll like this." And only lazy, waste-of-ink-and-paper magazines ever resort to that sort of writing. The only honest thing to do*



is to mark everything from our own perspective. And, despite all it's got going for it, we found NBA Hangtime *boring. As soon as a basketball game comes along that we enjoy we'll be glad to give it a high score.* **Ed**

"Sort it out"

I was hoping Sly Guy Zy would deliver a decent review of *KI Gold*, but he's slagged it off by calling it a 2D game from a past era, lacking depth and a year too late. This is no way to talk about the N64's first beat-'em-up. It would've come out earlier had the N64 been released earlier. The gameplay isn't slow and boring like *Tekken's*, and the graphics are amazing, with 3D backgrounds and camera views. The lack of depth is more than made up for by the competitiveness of bouts, and the game will also be full-screen and full-speed on PAL machines. Rare have included a very favourable training mode for novice players. But Zy puts

off all buyers to what is arguably the most spectacular beat-'em-up ever. So sort it out with your UK review.
Farooq Waraich, Swansea

Killer Instinct Gold is a solid enough beat-'em-up, and I reckon Zy's score – 62% – reflects that. It's perfectly enjoyable and everything, but just doesn't have that extra 'je ne sais quois' (a bit of French, there) (hopefully) that an N64 game should, and is nothing like as much fun as the N64's first batch of proper 3D beat-'em-ups hopefully will be.

We never play Killer Instinct Gold *at all here in the* **N64** *office, and, tellingly, have probably had more fun with Midway's* War Gods *this month. Mainly because of the announcer's silly voice, though, admittedly.* **Ed**

"Sort of treatment"

I like your style – honest and in-depth. Good to see a magazine really acknowledge the importance of game longevity to the average consumer. I'm unemployed, so when I buy a game (which is only occasionally) it's a big spend-out from which I want an equal return: i.e., many hours of quality play. Your policy of completing software means you give a game the same sort of treatment I will, so a decent score equates to a genuinely worthwhile purchase. Many magazine reviewers can't help but be out of touch with the real world – they receive countless titles for free, and so can't appreciate the financial side of software, never being in the position of owning a game which initially seems good but ultimately turns out to be seriously flawed – too easy or repetitive – and then being lumbered with a poor game for weeks until you can afford to trade it in or buy a new one. Luckily this situation has yet to occur with my N64, but it's a trap I was often suckered into when I owned a PlayStation.
Chris Chadwick, Wrexham

Exactly. It might mean we don't often get to write 'WORLD EXCLUSIVE!' all over our cover, but we reckon that spending time reviewing a game properly has got to be better than playing it for ten minutes (if at all), hastily cobbling together a review based on stuff off the Internet, and filling pages with preview screen shots supplied by the game's publisher so it looks like we've got to all the hard levels. Thanks for noticing. **Ed**

"Does irritate me"

Now that's annoying. There I was, all set to congratulate you on another fine Future mag and maybe even enquire as to Farty's health in a warmheartedly nostalgic kind of way, and you go and do something dozy to arse it all up.

I'm talking about the *Blast Corps* review. What's the first thing I read when I open the mag? "We promise to play every game right through to the end before giving it a score, no matter how hard it is" etc. etc. etc. – and what do you do in said review? Complain about the game being too short while openly

GO! GO!

BONUS LETTERS

I marked your words and you were spot on in saying that Nintendo UK would drop its prices. For this reason I'm going to buy an N64 in the summer, and I'll be buying your mag from now on. Keep up the great work! I shall be passing on the good word about your magazine.
Ian McGaughey, Belfast

Er, well, it was more of a well-informed guess than anything, but I'm glad it worked out. **Ed**

Could you tell my mum that the N64 is really cool?
Oliver Harris, Wokingham

Mrs Harris: Oliver's right – the N64 is really, er, 'cool'. **Ed**

Hi Ed i like destroying playstations i got a sawn off shotgun for christmas and all i do is blow them up
If this does not get letter of the month then i will come round and destroy your N64.
Thank you.
Matt Gamble, Macclesfield

James is managing that perfectly well on his own, thank you. **Ed**

Why are you guys so hard on Wil? ("A freak"?!?) This pad-hogging, games-playing maestro is most generous – he sent me a Super Play T-shirt and a copy of *Super Play Gold* after the mag had closed.
Peter King, Rustington

He's clearly got too much spare time on his hands. Wil? Come away from that Shogi game! **Ed**

KUKUKUKUKU! STRAGO POOO KUMPOPO!
Sam Corn, Lewes

KUPO! **Ed**

DREAM ON

It's easy to whinge about the efforts of the world's games-creators not being up to scratch. But what games SHOULD they be writing? Here're your ideas...

CANNONBALL RUN
I'd love to see a game based on the classic Cannonball Run films. Something along the lines of *Cruis'n USA*, but obviously much better. You could choose any vehicle from any of the films, including JJ and Victor's ambulance, the red Ferrari with Fenderbaum and Blake dressed as priests, the sheik in the Rolls Royce, Jackie Chan in the high-powered Subaru etc. This could be brilliant if done properly – you could have road blocks put up by the police, who could also chase you *Road-Rash*-style. They're classic films just begging to be turned into a great game!
Simon Franklin, Leeds

Excellent. And it could come with a free, clip-on Burt Reynolds moustache.

3X3 EYES 64
My dream game would be *3X3 Eyes 64*. It'd be based on the great anime series, and would be an RPG. The combat would be real-time, with all the spells done like special moves in a beat-'em-up, and you'd be able to do combos and everything. All the attacks would be there, like when Yakamo summons Tojio the spider-thing, and Pai's glove and stuff. It would have all the characters and monsters, like Pai, Yakamo, Ran Po Po and Jake McDonald, and everyone else like Chokeye and those blokes that run along the wall strangely. Naturally it'd all be in glorious 3D, and it would be up to six-player at times. The puzzles would be challenging, but not in a I'm-going-to-smash-my-cart kind of way.
Max Henderson, Twickenham

Wil! Get back to work! You don't fool any of us! **Ed**

DOOM-STYLE X-FILES
My dream game would be a *Doom*-style X-Files game, where you go around dark rooms and misty forests shooting monsters and characters from X-File episodes like 'Tooms' and 'The Flukeman'. They could jump out of dark corners and scare your pants off! There could be a two-player option where player one plays as Mulder and player two plays as Scully. There could be a secret stage where you go into a UFO!
Daniel Margetts, Wokester

Hmm. There was meant to be a PC X-Files game in the pipeline, but it was probably all full of video footage. **Ed**

BENNY KATZ J2
My idea for a game is like *Wonder Project J2* – but based on a popular TV show! Yes, you've guessed it: *Benny Katz J2!* in the game you have to put Dr Katz's son, Ben, back onto the path of civilization without 'giving him a whupping'. The Squiggle-vision™ graphics could be easily replicated on the N64 and the main aim would be to go on a date with Laura, the receptionist. And... "You know what the music means."
Ben Hall, RAF Bruggen

Can any **N64** *readers explain what this chap's on about?* **Ed**

BEAT-'EM-UP RPG
I would love seeing *Dragonball Z RPG* transported to the N64, but with another fighting system. I'm thinking of a beat-'em-up system. Yes, I'm thinking of a beat-'em-up RPG. You play like in *Secret of Mana* or *Final Fantasy*, but if you get into a fight it becomes a beat-'em-up à la *Street Fighter* or *Tekken*.
Hobming Sing, Holland

A promising idea. Except you'd only be able to meet about 12 different characters, because decent fighters take up so much cart space. And, if you didn't watch it, it might be in danger of turning into a Final Fight *game.*

As you rub the sleep from your eyes, grab a biro and a bit of paper, jot down your dream game idea, and send it to:

Dream On,
N64 Magazine,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BA1 2BW.

CLUB 64

I'M THE BEST

Right, a bit of order is what's needed here. From now on, 'I'm the Best' gets a bit more professional. Go on! Send in your times!

How it all works...

You send in you time or score for one of the chart categories below. If it's in the top five, we'll print it. And if it's good enough to make the number one spot we'll reward the lucky gamer with an exclusive **N64** pin badge. Each month we'll also nominate one gamer for a 'Star Performance' award, but they'll have had to have performed an exceptional feat of N64 gaming to have earned it. This month it's Neil Daunt from Guernsey – the first **N64** reader to break the minute barrier on Mario Circuit in *Mario Kart's* NTSC version.

There's only one slight complication to all this. Although you can send in your times without photographic evidence if you want, we're suspicious types here at **N64** and we won't be sending out any prizes until we've seen some hard proof. Times we have seen photos for have 'confirmed' next to them, so you can rest-assured they're 100% genuine.

Feel free to send in your best times/scores in for games not included on this page – if we get enough response, we'll start a new chart. Don't send in times for different events in games already included, though – it confuses James and he'll get in one of his moods.

Star Performance

We had some Japanese visitors over a couple of weeks ago. They reckoned they were pretty good at *Mario Kart*, and they were – in the region of 01'05" for three laps of Mario Circuit.

So it was all the more impressive when we got a phone call from Neil Daunt's girlfriend, a couple of weeks ago. Because Neil's either shy or mute (we don't know which) she'd called to say that he'd managed a truly remarkable 00'59"16. Sure enough, a couple of days later the photographic proof turned up.

As far as we know, Neil is the first person in England to break the minute barrier. This is the kind of performance we respect at N64 Magazine, and as a consequence we have pleasure in awarding Neil a 256K Memory Pak (kindly supplied by our friends at Blaze (tel 01302 751428), an N64 pin badge and this round of applause.

MARIO KART (American/Japanese)

LUIGI CIRCUIT

No times submitted

MARIO CIRCUIT



1 00'59"16 Confirmed
Neil Daunt, Guernsey

PEACH CIRCUIT

2 02'35"34 Unconfirmed
Simon Franklin, Leeds

TUROK (UK)

TIME CHALLENGE MODE

Andrew and Stephen celebrate their Turok times, yesterday.

1 3'17" Confirmed
Andrew Mills, Limavady

2 3'30" Confirmed
Stephen Adams, Limavady

3 3'32" Unconfirmed
Neil Plant, Falmouth

WAVE RACE (American/Japanese)

SUNNY BEACH



1 1'05"820 Confirmed
Carl Waters, Telford

2 1'05"884 Unconfirmed
Jon Hatch, 11th Signal Regt

3 1'06"193 Confirmed
Chris Murphy, Middleton

4 1'06"254 Confirmed
Lee Hammond, Saddington

5 1'06"374 Confirmed
Craig Morgan, Knaphill

WAVE RACE (UK)

SUNNY BEACH

1 1'18"018 Confirmed
Frankey Mayers, Blackheath

STUNT MODE, DOLPHIN PARK

(Any version)



2 20281 Confirmed
Andrew Hurst, Havant

3 17208 Confirmed
Frankey Mayers, Blackheath

4 16659 Unconfirmed
Steven Housley, Bradford

SUPER MARIO 64 (American/Japanese)

FOOT RACE WITH KOOPA THE QUICK

1 0'19"0 Unconfirmed
Ryan Cowell, Cramlington

2 0'21"0 Unconfirmed
Andrew Watson, Blackpool

PEACH SLIDE



1 0'16"0 Confirmed
Ciaran Haren, Belfast

2 0'18"0 Unconfirmed
Ryan Cowell, Cramlington

SUPER MARIO 64 (UK)

FOOT RACE WITH KOOPA THE QUICK

1 0'21"8 Confirmed
Andrew Mills, Limavady

2 0'21"9 Confirmed
Stephen Adams, Limavady

3 0'22"9 Confirmed
Neil Faulkner, Limavady

4 0'32"6 Unconfirmed
John Young, Eastbourne

PEACH SLIDE

1 0'16"1 Unconfirmed
John Young, Eastbourne

Next Month!

Keep sending in those times for these games but what about *Starfox* and *Blast Corps*, eh? For *Starfox* we reckon a total hits count would be the easiest. As for *Blast Corps*, how about the Oyster Harbour mission – can you beat Wil's best of 21'08"1? And for those people who sent in videos, James promises to grab you scores and times by next issue.



admitting that you haven't actually finished it.

I personally think *Blast Corps* is one of the finest games of the decade, and while I'm glad to see it got a good score, it does irritate me that you didn't even bother trying to get the gold medals to see what happened before writing the review. As you probably know by now, there's a LOT more to come after that: a handful of new levels, Time Attack mode and the rock-hard Platinum targets. Granted, none of these are vital to the main game, but it's a lot better than the whole thing just ending after the carrier blows, isn't it? How you can possibly knock *Blast Corps's* lifespan is beyond me when even something like Super *Mario 64* doesn't have much of a life to look forward to once it's been effectively 'completed'.
All the best.
Garet Jax, via e-mail

WHAT? And we shouldn't have printed a Starfox 64 *review until*



Gagh! It's nicked all our gold medals!

we'd got gold medals on all its levels too, presumably. And we shouldn't have reviewed Turok *until... what, we'd shot every single dinosaur in the whole game? How long do you want to wait for your reviews, exactly? Rather than just pretending we've finished a game, like rubbish magazines, and printing months-old PR screenshots of later levels in the hope that our readers are too stupid to notice, we do actually play right through all the Star-Game-award-winning games we play. But even we have to draw the line somewhere. Quite right –* Blast Corps's *got weeks of life left in it if you're prepared to re-visit levels in search of medals, and Wil's currently doing just that, in his bedroom at home. (I'm trying to get all Starfox's, meanwhile.) But to say we haven't 'finished' it until we got them is... well, insanity, frankly. Maybe there's something in this, though. Watch out for some sort of 'Which games we're still playing and how many medals and things we've got in them' section next month...* **Ed**

"To top it all"

Congratulations on an excellent publication. It's great to see you all back, and better than ever.

However, and it's a big 'however', I was very disappointed with your review of *Wave Race*.

First of all you forgot to mention borders, lack of speed etc. – unforgivable on Nintendo's part. Second, and unforgivable on your part, you print Japanese times and not PAL ones. And then, to top it all, on page 82 you offer a joypad for the best time, again your own Jap time.

Oh well, I guess a rich importer will win the pad while we PAL owners once again get a raw deal.
Clifford Bonney, Oxford

Yep. Sorry. Bit of a screw-up with the Wave Race *review. As we explained in last month's Planet 64 we weren't expecting there to be such a massive timing difference between the two versions. From now on we'll be checking all games for this sort of thing, and printing separate times for import and PAL versions where necessary.* **Ed**

"Boring, tedious and slow"

GAME ZONE
New footie game scores at home

As much as I want to scream the praises of anything to do with the Nintendo 64, in the case of this Mario game it simply cannot be done, it's just too tedious and slow. Score 4/10.

After buying an N64 and *Super Mario* and being chuffed to bits with them, and reading countless reviews praising both the console and the game, I've been wallowing in the pond of gameplaying heaven.

So imagine my surprise when, perusing my local rag, I came across this review of *Mario*. The author accuses *Mario* of being boring, tedious and slow, and the joypad of being too complex, and awards the game 4/10.
Darren Jaggers, Bordon

Tch, eh? And I thought we were strict. He should be thrown into the pond of gameplaying heaven and have his head held under. **Ed**

"Things to slot"

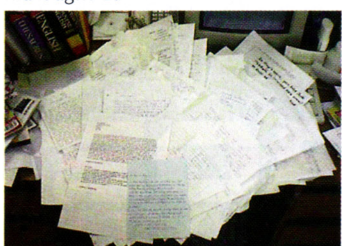
How about a new section in your magazine called 'Invention Corner'? It can be where people send in their inventions, like new control pads, new things to slot into control pads, other add-ons for the console etc. And Invention of the Month could win some sort of prize. Or, even, Invention of the Year could actually be built.
Russell Cocklin, Romford

Like, er, what? We can't have an Invention Corner without any inventions, so you'd better slip on your lab coat and get inventing. **Ed**

"Keep all the prizes"

Although I think your magazine is great, I'm not going to say so because nearly all of your letters say something like this. This has led me to suspect that, although you may get "letters by the gazillion", you just make a few up and keep all the prizes. How are we meant to believe that the letters page isn't a phoney?
Leyton Page, Stonehouse

What are you trying to say? That everyone thinks **N64** *Magazine is rubbish, and would never write in to say they like it? Eh? Is that it? We do genuinely get piles of great letters every day from happy* **N64** *readers, and, although we love reading them, modesty prevents us from printing more than a fraction. So we never need to make any up. Especially for you, however, faithless one, here's photographic evidence of this month's mailbag...* **Ed**



So tell me this...

If there's anything – anything – you want to know about the N64, its games and the bits and pieces that plug into it, write to us and we're bound to know the answer.

I was just wondering if you could tell me why the Virtual Boy was such a big failure. To my knowledge there were four games, and from what screenshots of the games I saw they looked crap. I've also played on a mate's Virtua Boy, and I just couldn't get into *Mario Tennis*. I'm glad I didn't buy one. It's the only let-down NintenJo has ever had in the world of video-gaming.
Steven Mytum, Sherburn-in-Elmet

Virtua Boy games are actually jolly good once you've got used to the weird display. Red Alert is a great shoot-'em-up, and Mario Tennis is well worth persevering with. But it failed because, as you say, there weren't many games for it, and it was probably just too weird for its own good. **Ed**

1. A few mags have said *Donkey Kong Country 64* will be appearing on the N64. Is this true, and do you know it for a fact? How?
2. Do you know/think that any of these games will appear on the N64: *Discworld, Worms, Cool Boarders, Championship Manager, ESPN*, or a sequel to *Wave Race 64?*



3. Will a PAL version of *Bomberman 64* ever be released?
4. Will the 64DD be able to upgrade stats, or create new missions, or add new teams/people into games instead of us having to blow another £50-60 on the sequel?
Ryan McBride, Ellington

1. If Donkey Kong Country 64 appears on anything, it's likely to be the N64. Er. But actually, a game called Ultra Donkey Kong has just appeared in Japanese release lists. There's no date for it or anything, but it's listed as a 64DD game so expect it next year. Anything DK64-related you've read previously has just been speculation.
2. Every N64 game we know about is included in the Ultra Release List on page 23. We've heard nothing about any of the ones you list, and all sound pretty unlikely, unfortunately.
3. Almost certainly. Hudson have a European office, based in Germany, and are likely to be making plans now.
4. Definitely. This is one of its main selling-points. Games will need to be written with expansion in mind, though, which none of the N64 games released so far have been. **Ed**

1. I have just bought a UK N64 with *Mario 64*. What are the most exciting titles to buy at the moment? Is it worth waiting for *Mario Kart* and *ISS64*?
2. Are the official N64 coloured pads available yet? I've seen some of the other imitations, but there's nothing like the real thing.
3. Can the D-pad be used in *ISS64*, and can the players' names be changed like the PlayStation's version, *ISS Deluxe*, via the memory card.
4. Would you say that the official memory cards are the most efficient, or are other makes just as effective?
Kwabena Acheampong, London

1. Wave Race 64 is great, as are Turok and Pilotwings. But Mario Kart and ISS64 are both brilliant too. Any of them would make a fine buy.
2. They're meant to be being released to coincide with the launch of Mario Kart 64, so they should just be in the shops now.



3. You can use the D-pad for penalties and things if you like, but the analogue stick tends to be better. And, yes, you can change the players' names and save them onto a Controller Pak.
4. Third-party memory paks work fine, and offer much more space for the momey than the real thing. But, although we've never had any problems with third-party packs, we tend, irrationally, to prefer to entrust our really important data to the real thing. **Ed**

The Rumble Pak is fine, like a vibrating pager, but what does 'Buru' mean on the official Japanese packaging?
Paul Daniel, Bromley

'Buru buru buru', which is written around the picture of the Rumble Pak on the Japanese Starfox 64 box, is a Japanesification of 'Brrrrrr', a sort of vibrating noise. **Ed**

I have a small problem: I've always been a fan of two player games such as *Alien Breed, Streets of Rage, Zombies* and *X-Men*. You know the ones I mean, the co-operative games where you can play along with your mates against the computer. Are there any such games penned for the N64 or is it destined to be a loner's machine or built for fierce competition (usually with hard mates who don't like losing)?
Elliot Johnson, via e-mail

Hmm. Well, in ISS64 you have have up to four players on the same team if you want. And most sports games, like FIFA and Gretzky, let you do this. Apart from that, though, Go Go!! Troublemakers is the only two-player co-operative game I can think of that's coming up. **Ed**

1. Will Hasbro's *Beast Wars* game for the PlayStation be likely for an enhanced N64 conversion? (The TV show's CGI visuals would suit the N64's graphics perfectly...)
2. The PlayStation is host to a fair few 'classic collections', like Namco's *Museums*, so I'm wondering whether the N64 or N64DD has any of those sort of things planned for it? They may be a bit wasteful of the N64's powers, but extremely welcome nonetheless.
3. What company does Gumpei Yokoi work for these days? (I heard that he 'left' Nintendo...)
Andrew Crane, via e-mail

1. Hasbro haven't announced any plans to develop N64 games, so probably not, no.
2. As it happens, I asked the head of Konami's N64 development whether there was any chance of getting a cart full of old Konami games when I spoke to him a couple of months ago. He didn't seem terribly keen on the idea, though, unfortunately. And Nintendo seem more intent on doing new 64-bit versions of all their old games than re-releasing the originals. So, er, probably not.
3. Gumps, the inventor of the Game Boy and Virtual Boy, has set up his own research and development company. Heaven alone knows what he's working on now. **Ed**

Puzzled? Then write without delay to:

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N64 MAGAZINE DIRECTORY

The complete guide to every game we've ever reviewed in N64 Magazine.

How it works

- **The game's name**
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- **If it's an import, whether it's a US or Japanese one**
- **A summary of our review**
- **The best tip or cheat, and any issues we've done guides in**
- **The reviewer's initials (see below)**
- **Score**
- **The issue we reviewed it in**
- **How much it costs**

DAIDOKORO HAI! HAI! 2028

High Heart | UK release: Summer 1999 | £50 | N64 1 ● 78% ● ER

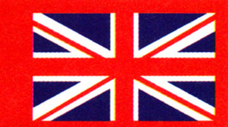
This latest instalment of the Daidikoro saga sees White Nimbo, the apprentice carpenter, summoned by the Great Toriatsukau and sent in search of four magic squirrels. High Heart's new 3D engine is impressive, and the continuous harmonica music creates a moody atmosphere. The only problem is the brevity of Nimbo's quest: perhaps because of limited cart size, we'd found the squirrels and rescued Pretty Margaret within about a week.

● The laughing tree surgeon might appear friendly, but don't trust him. Also, if you insert all six of the corks into the wolf, he'll carry you across the lake to the Isle of Batter.

N64 reviewers

JA = James Ashton
JD = Jonathan Davies
MH = Marcus Hawkins
TW = Tim Weaver
WO = Wil Overton
ZN = Zy Nicholson

UK Games DIRECTORY



FIFA 64

Electronic Arts | £60 | N64 2 ● 39% ● TW



This makes you wonder two things. Firstly, how, with all that advanced technical gubbins at their fingertips, EA managed to produce a worse *FIFA* game than the PlayStation's. And secondly, how, in the wide, wide, world of sport, this passed Nintendo's quality control department. The Albanians execute for lesser offences.

● Remember, you only need tap the shoot button once. The delay is terrible but you *will* eventually produce something. Don't press a second time or your shot will fly over.

PILOTWINGS 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo | £50 | N64 1 ● 89% ● TW



The first *Pilotwings* split gamers' opinions with its floaty, airbound subject matter. However, this 64-bit refurbishment is likely to have a much wider appeal than the SNES original. Incorporating the sublime talents of flight sim specialists Paradigm and Nintendo's usual playable sheen, *Pilotwings 64* emerges as a supreme example of how to harness the N64's immense potential.

● The four Birdman Stars are situated in the park in New York, inside the Arctic Island's waterfall, in a cave on Crescent Island and on the bridge-shaped rock on Holiday Island.

INT. SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64



Konami | £60 | N64 3 ● 92% ● TW



The finest football game in existance, *ISS64* is a work of art. Apart from its looking gorgeous, the programmers seem to have had a real feel for football, allowing the player to build the most intricate of passing build-ups, deliver the killer through-ball and score the sweetest of goals. A practically flawless game (improved considerably over its *Perfect Striker* incarnation) that could have only been bettered with the addition of real teams. Kills all known *FIFA*s dead.

● To get the super teams enter this code at the title screen: Hold Z and press Up, L, Up, L, Down, L, Down, L, Left, R, Right, R Left, R, Right, R, B, A, Start. ● Full game guide in **N64**/4.

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

Nintendo | £55 | N64 1 ● 78% ● JA



10 levels of varying game styles which somehow fails to be more than the sum of its parts. The fantastic snowspeeder and space battles are ultimately let down by some lack-lustre *Doom*-style bits and the truly awful speeder bike on Luke's home planet, Mos Eisley. It still has a great Star Wars feel, though and is loads better than the PC's *Dark Forces*.

● To see the end sequence, enter your name as _Credits (case sensitive).
● Challenge Point guides in **N64**/2 and **N64**/3.

KILLER INSTINCT GOLD

Nintendo/Rare | £55 | N64 3 ● 62% ● MH

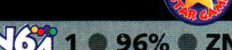


Killer Instinct might have been a big deal a couple of years ago but even an arcade-prefect conversion looks a bit out-dated on the N64. It's not that *KI* wasn't a good game to start with – if you're still in love with it, you'll definitely enjoy this version – it's just that for most people enthusiasm for this type of beat-'em-up is at a low ebb. And that includes us.

● To access the extra options, during the character bio screens in the intro press Z, B, A, L A, Z in sequence. ● Tips in **N64**/1 and in the review in **N64**/3.

SUPER MARIO 64

N64 STAR GAME



Nintendo | £60 | N64 1 ● 96% ● ZN



When other developers first caught a glimpse of *SM64*, they went back to the drawing board with their efforts. The game is sublime – taking everything that's made previous *Mario* titles great and fleshing it out into 3D. Mario himself can do just about anything, the levels are huge, packed with incredible ideas and there're loads of secret bits. The world's greatest video game.

● Loads of tips in our review in **N64**/1.
● '20 most-asked questions', **N64**/1, **N64**/2. Guides in **N64**/2, **N64**/3, **N64**/4.

TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER



Acclaim £70 | N64 1 ● 91% ● TW

Replacing *Doom's* cyberdemons with screen-filling dinosaurs, cranking up the violence to ludicrously bloody proportions and adding a series of breathtakingly devastating weapons, Acclaim/Iguana have produced – yes – a monster. A phenomenally good game which really shows the technical gulf that exists between the N64 and the other consoles.



● At the edge of a platform the screen will dip. Jump here to gain maximum distance.
● Full cheat listing Tips Extra **N64**/2. ● Key-finding guide in **N64**/2.

WAVE RACE 64



Nintendo £55 | N64 2 ● 90% ● ZN

Breathtaking water-based racing is the order of the day in Miyamoto's astounding *Wave Race*, with the N64 once again proving its mind-expanding capabilites. Thoroughly realistic water effects, a scintillating two-player speedway and the possibility of trying your hand at Lee-Majors-style stunt work, make this easily as enjoyable as *Mario Kart 64*.



● To achieve the Helicopter stunt and 1700 points, when you're on the ramp, turn sharply in a Left/Up direction and then hold Down to pull off a sideways flip.

Import Games DIRECTORY

DORAEMON

Epoch  UK release: Unlikely | N64 2 ● 60% ● TW

Just as its predecessors tried and failed to turn *Mario* into a blue atomic cat, so too does the latest *Doraemon* game try to bring a touch of feline magic to a *Mario 64*-like universe. Sadly, things turn out to be slightly linear, slightly confusing and all-too-tedious. Perhaps more suited to your younger brother or sister.



● Once you've beaten the missile in the car chase, race him again and beat him for a secret prize. Do it again and you'll win yourself a green crystal.

BLAST CORPS

Nintendo  UK release: Late July | N64 2 ● 88% ● JD

Only about once in five years does a completely original game turn up, and *Blast Corps* is that game. It's incredibly good fun, placing you in charge of a fleet of demolition vehicles and compelling you to clear a path for a runaway nuclear missile carrier. Technically it's N64 through and through and, coming from the mysterious Rare, it's British too. The only snag: it doesn't take long to see all of it.



● Try parking your vehicle against a building in such a fashion that the bloke can't get out, and then hold Z. After a second or two the building'll explode.

THE GLORY OF ST ANDREWS

Seta  UK release: Unlikely | N64 1 ● 58% ● TW

The N64's first golf game lacks any redeeming features. A ropey graphical engine – inducing a certain sense of 16-bit déjà vû – and an only partially successful use of the analogue stick as a virtual club. A hugely disappointing golfing debut.



● Use the Player Configuration screen to customise your player's clubs for the course you're about to play.

CRUIS'N USA

Midway  UK release: TBA | N64 1 ● 34% ● JD

Undoubtedly an accurate conversion of the coin-op. But that, while worth popping the occasional 50p into, is hardly Earth-shattering stuff. Racing across the USA isn't all that tough, even with the irritatingly over-sensitive controls. The music is awful, and the graphics, while functional, use only a fraction of the N64's power. Better racing games will appear.



● At the track selection screen and hold down Left C, Bottom C and L for Golden Gate Park, top C, right C and L for Indiana, or Right C, Bottom C and L for San Francisco.

HUMAN GRAND PRIX

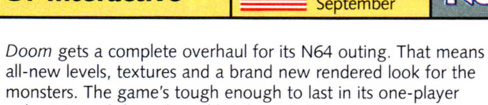
Human  UK release: Winter 1997 | N64 2 ● 71% ● TW

Although never coming up to the standards of the PlayStation's *F1* – inexcusable, really, when you consider the extra power available to the programmers – *Human Grand Prix* provides a throughly entertaining bash at Formula 1 driving with beautiful handling and a plethora of options. Shame about the horrendous pop-up, though.

● To benefit fully at corners, don't use the brake, just stab at the accelerator.
● For an example of a course layout, read our review in **N64**/2.

DOOM 64

GT Interactive  UK release: September | N64 3 ● 80% ● JA



Doom gets a complete overhaul for its N64 outing. That means all-new levels, textures and a brand new rendered look for the monsters. The game's tough enough to last in its one-player only state and the only real let-down is the animation on the monsters. *Turok's* a better game (with its running and jumping et cetera) but *Doom 64* is still definately worth a look.



● At the password screen enter ?TJL BDFW BFGV JVVB for a complete cheat menu.
● Other tips in the review, **N64**/3

J-LEAGUE PERFECT STRIKER

Konami  UK release: Now (as *ISS64*) | N64 1 ● 89% ● TW

Konami prove their footballing dominance with a magical footballing sim, combining breathtaking animation, a plethora of fantastic moves and some outrageous goals. *Perfect Striker* is as close to The Beautiful Game as any computer game has ever come. It has since become *ISS64* for its UK release. Goal Lazo, as some would no doubt say.



● Learn how to use the 'kick-ahead-and-run' button (Bottom C) both for attacking and catching opposing players.





KING OF PRO BASEBALL



Imagineer |  **UK release:** Unlikely |  N64 1 ● 68% ● TW

The players are super-deformed and cute, and this initially proves tremendously entertaining. If you can fathom the copious Japanese menus, that is. Eventually, though, the too slow runners and the super-skillful CPU opposition will begin to get you down.



● Learn to use the C buttons to run your players between bases. Against human opposition, it's quite easy to steal bases by running on a strike or a ball.

NBA HANGTIME

Midway |  **UK release:** TBA | N64 1 ● 52% ● JD

Technically an excellent continuation of the *NBA Jam* series, with huge (albeit 2D players), great animation and sheaves of special moves and secrets. It is, however, basketball at the end of the day, and thus consists of running backwards and forwards, endlessly scoring baskets. Until you fall asleep. We'd rather play a decent football game.



● Create duplicates of star players by entering 0000 as your PIN, and then type in your name as the name of the player. (Try his first name, or first name + initial of surname.)

MAH JONG 64

Koei |  **UK release:** Never | N64 3 ● 65% ● JD

Built around an imaginary mah jong university, *Mah Jong 64* is more of a beginner's guide to the game than previous efforts. Unfortunately, with its heavy reliance on Japanese text, unless you're already fairly profecient the ancient Japanese tile game you'll be completely lost with this. And even if you do know how to play, is this kind of thing really what you want to be doing with you N64?



● If you need one tile to go out and another player makes a melded four by drawing that tile, adding it to a previously melded triplet, you may 'rob a kong' and thus go out.

POWER PRO BASEBALL 4

Konami | **UK release:** Unlikely | N64 3 ● 54% ● TW

No, we haven't forgotten the '6'. *PPB4* is the fourth in Konami's series of baseball games that started on the SNES years ago. Despite the fact that the game went ballistic in Japan, we don't rate it as highly as Imagineer's effort, *King of Pro Baseball*. The players are similarly 'fat' but the picture-in-picture system doesn't work that well and the game is criminally difficult against the CPU.



● See **N64**/3 for tips on understanding Japanese game menus.

MAH JONG MASTER

Konami |  **UK release:** Unlikely | N64 1 ● 69% ● WO

If you've never played mah jong, this would be a very tough way to learn, with its copious Japanese text. If you have, though, it's a jolly good rendition, with a selection of computer personalities to play against and some weird Japlish intro screens.



● If you have a melded triplet, says Wil, and draw the fourth from the wall, you may declare 'kong' and add it to your triplet to make a melded four.

STARFOX 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo |  **UK release:** September | N64 3 ● 94% ● JD

Lock up Shigeru Miyamoto, a rabbit, a team of Nintendo's finest programmers, a fox, a toad, a small star system and a falcon in a room for twelve months and *Star Fox 64* is the result. It's the shoot-'em-up the N64 has been waiting for, pushing the machine to new limits of technical sophistication and being immeasurably good fun into the bargain.



● Complete the game and at the title screen hold B and move the Analogue stick. Our heroes heads will follow the wandering '64'. ● More cheats in Tips Extra, **N64**/4

MARIO KART 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo |   **UK release:** Out now | N64 1 ● 91% ● JD

Mario Kart 64 had a lot to live up to, what with the SNES's *Super Mario Kart* being one of Nintendo's all-time most-loved games. But, bless it, it just about pulls it off, with a whole new world of 3D courses and more complex and subtle kart handling. A variety of modes means it never gets boring, and the four-player split-screen mode is rivetting. A vital purchase.



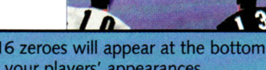
● Press and hold the accelerator button just as the blue start light comes on. This should give you a turbo-start.



WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY

Midway | **UK release:** TBA | N64 1 ● 70% ● JD

Ice hockey arcade-style, with violent collisions, an absurdly fast-moving puck and excellent 3D graphics. Wide-ranging options allow you to play anything from rules-free 3-a-side in a reduced rink, to a proper five-a-side simulation with infractions a-plenty. There's not a great deal of subtlety here, but the four-player game is tremendous.



● On the options screen, hold a C button and press R. 16 zeroes will appear at the bottom of the screen. Alter these using the C buttons to change your players' appearances.

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

Midway |  **UK release:** Out now | N64 1 ● 34% ● MH

We're bored of *Mortal Kombat* now, given that it's barely changed over the years and has long-since been superseded by the likes of *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter*. And it has to be said, this N64 conversion is the final straw. The sound, for one thing, is awful and the animation is, unbelievably, worse than the PlayStation's. Please leave this game alone.



● For unlimited credits, press D, D, U, U, R, R, L, L on the story screen. When you next lose a battle you'll find you're in Freeplay.

WONDER PROJECT J2

Enix |  **UK release:** Unlikely | N64 1 ● 55% ● WO

You'll have to be either Japanese-speaking or very 'special' to be able to get to grips with this weird adventure. And when you do it's not all that great. You've got to guide a robotic girl through various 'life' situations with the overall aim of helping her realise her dream of becoming a real person. Which is, you know, nice.



● If Josette flies into a temper and won't co-operate, try winning her back with a 3D pudding. (Er, according to Wil.)



NUMBERS

Games released in the UK (ones translated and optimised for PAL TVs) are either distributed through THE (Nintendo's British representatives) or another games publisher with a base here. It's not necessarily the game's developer or first publisher who releases the game in the UK. Check our reviews for details.

Of the companies listed below, those with a UK base have a phone number included along with their web site address. All the software companies listed have either released games for Nintendo systems in the past or who definitely have N64 titles in the pipeline. Web addresses for some other handy Nintendo sites are also included.

N64 SITES

Die Hard Game Fan www.gamefan.com/
Game Japan www.rcp.co.jp/recca/
N64.com www.n64.com/
Nintendo 64 Headquarters www.n64hq.com/
Nintendo Australia www.nintendo.com.au/
Nintendo Japan www.nintendo.co.jp/
Nintendo USA www.nintendo.com/
Nintendojo members.aol.com/peers2/

SOFTWARE COMPANY SITES AND NUMBERS

Acclaim (0171) 344 5000
Japan www.acclaim-jp.com/
US www.acclaimnation.com/
Activision (0181) 7429400 www.activision.com/
Argonaut www.argonaut.com/
ASCII www.asciient.com/
Atari Games www.atarigames.com/
Athena www.sega.co.jp/gamesoft/athena
Atlus www.atlus.com/
Blizzard www.blizzard.com/
BMG (0171) 973 0011 www.bmg.com/
Boss www.bossgame.com/
Bottom Up www.ifnet.or.jp/
Capcom Japan www.capcom.co.jp/
US www.capcoment.com/
Crystal Dynamics www.crystald.com/
Data East www.dataeast.com/
DMA Design www.dma.co.uk/
Eidos (0121) 625 3366 www.eidosinteractive.com/
Electronic Arts (01753) 549442 www.ea.com/
Enix www.marinet.or.jp/com/enix/
Epic Megagames www.epicgames.com/
Epoch www.fjt.co.jp/
Gametek (01753) 854444 www.gametek.com/
Graphics School http://204.174.42.103
Gremlin (01142) 753423 www.gremlin.co.uk
GT (0171) 258 3791 www.gtinteractive.com/
GTE www.im.gte.com/
Hudsonsoft (0181) 536 1153 www.hudson.co.jp/
Human www.human.co.jp/
Imagineer www.imagineer.co.jp/
Infogrames (0171) 738 8199
Interplay (01628) 423666 www.interplay.com/
Japan System Supply www.titan.co.jp/jss/
JVC (0171) 240 3121
Koei www.koei.co.jp/
Konami (01895) 585 3000
Japan www.konami.co.jp/
US www.konami.com
LucasArts www.lucasarts.com/
MicroProse www.microprose.com/
Midway www.midway.com/
Mindscape www.mindscape.com/
Namco Japan www.namco.co.jp/pacland/
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Ocean (0161) 832 6633 odon.com/ocean
Paradigm www.paradigmsim.com
Psygnosis (0151) 282 3000 www.pysgnosis.com/
Rambus www.reambus.com/
Seta www.seta.co.jp/
Shiny www.shiny.com/
Squaresoft www.spin.ad.jp/square/
THE Games: (01703) 653377
THQ (01372) 745 222 http://www.thq.com
Titus http://www.titusgames.com/
Ubi Soft (0181) 941 4004 http://www.ubisoft.com/
Vic Tokai http://www.victokai.com/
Video System http://www.dreamsquare.co.jp/
Williams www.williamsentertainment.com/

Web site of the month

Hudson Soft
www.hudson.co.jp/



Unfortunately, it's all in Japanese, but Hudson are keener than most to get the latest screenshots on to their Web site as quickly as possible, with a site that's updated far more often than most. Navigating you way through the text is hit and miss, but you should be able to find the latest shots of *Bomberman 64*, *Soccer 64* and *Dual Heroes* in there somewhere.

N64 MAGAZINE Back Issues

So you missed an issue of **N64** Magazine, did you? You'd better hurry up and fill in the form below if you want to make amends – back issues are selling out faster than you'd believe possible.

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ISSUE 2



The Blast Corps Edition

Wave Race 64 review and guide. *FIFA 64* denouncement as well as the best import *Blast Corps* review you'll read. 'How to...'s include 'Get 70 Stars the Fastest in *Mario 64*', 'Find all the Keys in *Turok*' and part 1 of 'Obtain all the Challenge Points in *Shadows of the Empire*'. And there's a huge guide to Nintendo.

ISSUE 3

The Starfox Edition

Frankly superb *Starfox 64* and *Doom 64* import reviews along with *International Superstar Soccer 64* and *Killer Instinct Gold* UK reviews. Second parts of our *Mario 64* and *Shadows* 'How to...'s, as well as a quick guide to playing Japanese games. And! There's a huge survey of Japanese developers.

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NINT

Last month it was Japan. This month, continuing our complete guide to the world's N64 developers, we pack our toothbrushes and take a tour of the United States of America.

HAVE A NICE PLAY

inside America's games industry

by Mark Ramshaw

America may have been the birthplace of the video game, but since the launch of the NES console in the 1980s it's been Nintendo's machines that have dominated. Not surprisingly, a whole army of US game developers has marched out over the years, ready to pledge allegiance to the Japanese giant and bring a uniquely Western vision to a new generation of Nintendo games.

For, while Miyamoto and other leading lights of the Japanese development scene strive to push their games to more surreal, cartoonish and dream-like levels, America's coders have further refined other genres. And they reflect a society in love with fast-paced action, sports, and outlandish violence, just like their movies and television. All presented as a lavish, big budget spectacle, of course.

It's an approach which inevitably leads to more licence-based gaming, as well as titles which rely more on presentation value than content. But equally, the US development scene has been responsible for some of Nintendo's greatest moments. Electronic Arts, which as just committed itself to the N64, has been responsible for a whole slew of impressive sports titles for the SNES console. We've seen some excellent conversions of Williams' coin-ops make it to the Nintendo systems, including *NBA Jam* and that epitome of US gaming, *Mortal Kombat*.

And then there's the movie spin-offs from LucasArts, the work done by new developers on the block like Paradigm, and the new talent pushed by Nintendo of America itself. It may be Japan that's thus far been responsible for the bulk of N64 releases, but with American programmers at last getting to grips with the system, and more and more respected developers in line to become N64 licensees, it looks like the playing field is about to be evened. It's time to get ready for the Hollywood factor.

GO! GO!





Nintendo and the U.S.
The story so far

In the beginning there was Nintendo, and America wasn't very interested. Having witnessed the collapse of the console industry in the early '80s at the hands of Atari, the US was understandably less than smitten with the NES system when Minoru Arakawa and his small band of Nintendo of America employees attempted to break out of the coin-op market and into the homes back in 1985.

A lot of persistence and twelve months later, however, and one million systems had been sold. Nintendo had not only revived the American thirst for console systems, it had claimed the entire market as its own (for a while at least). The emergence of American developers, keen to buy into the world of Nintendo was inevitable. Not to mention highly desirable for Nintendo, who resisted setting up its own internal US division, but wanted to fully address the tastes and needs of the US gamers.

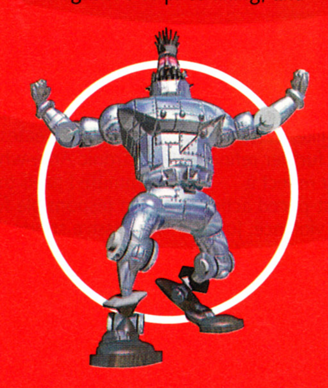
First to sign up were the US divisions of Japanese 'friends of Nintendo', such as Konami, Data East and Capcom. The first wave of wholly American developers signed up in '87, (including Acclaim, a company formed by two ex-Activision men) but Electronic Arts – with its impressive knack for bagging big sports licences and attaching them to quality simulations – took another three years to come on board and probably lost millions and millions of sales in the process. By the time the SNES hit the US, most developers (around 100 worldwide) were ready to work on the new system, although the arrival of Sega's 16-bit Mega Drive ensured Nintendo would never again have total control over the video game market.

With SNES game development Nintendo had bowed to pressure to ease licensing restrictions, though as in Japan, most developers were still obliged to pay Nintendo to manufacture their cartridges, and even those that didn't still had to buy security chips. Developers were now able to release the same games on other formats such as the Mega Drive, but to maintain quality, a limit was placed on the number of titles a publisher could release, unless they came out highly rated in Nintendo's internal evaluation system.

In reality Nintendo was still making as much money per cartridge and still controlling the actions of the third party developers. Nevertheless, some questioned the motive behind the US Government's Federal Trade Commission's hounding of Nintendo over allegations of price fixing, and accusations of unfair trade arising from the licensing restrictions and Nintendo's famous security lock-out chips. As Nintendo Of America's Peter Main said, "If Nintendo were an American company no one would have said a word."

Now the battle to establish the N64 has begun, and as with the SNES, it looks as though the fight over in America will be a hard, but ultimately triumphant one. And as with the SNES, most if not all US-sourced games will make it over to these shores. The same themes – sports, shoot-'em-ups, graphically intensive action games – are being used, albeit with much more flair and ambition than would ever have been possible in the days of the SNES.

Having fallen for the charms of *Zelda* and Square's impressive efforts, the Americans now also display a real fondness for story-driven role-playing games, so it's very likely we'll see them tackling the genre some time soon. And we're already witnessing the emergence of beat-'em-ups that attempt to offer a more westernised style of combat (Midway's weapon-heavy *Mace* springs immediately to mind). All of which will no doubt be welcomed with open arms by open minded N64 gamers here in the UK. Read on and make your mind up for yourself.





AMERICA
The developers

Paradigm

Paradigm has gone from being an unknown quantity with an impressive history in military simulations, to being probably the most highly regarded US thirty-party developer. And all because of *Pilotwings 64.*

Gary Bandy, an artist on *Pilotwings* and Paradigm's manager of business development, gave **N64** Magazine a quick history lesson: "Paradigm Simulation was formed back in the summer of 1990. The founders had been working on Silicon Graphics for other companies, and had a vision of a tool-based approach to creating simulations. Silicon Graphics helped out a little bit, and we wound up with two flagship products – Vega and Audioworks.

"We developed a very good rapport with SGI, working on some cutting edge technology for them, and also worked on the scenery as well as the visual and audio tools for *Magic Edge*, a location-based entertainment centre featuring 18 different aircraft pods all linked together. That whetted our appetite for the entertainment market, and when SGI and Nintendo got together, SGI very nicely recommended us. We had no idea we'd be doing *Pilotwings*, but we're sure glad we did!"

The success of *Pilotwings 64* has led to some changes at Paradigm, with the company now split in half (though the two divisions will continue to share resources), forming a separate 50 person-strong Entertainment division in December. A three-game deal with Japanese publisher Video System was signed a month later. "The whole purpose is to allow each company to focus on what they do best", explains Gary. "The business model for entertainment is very different from working with the military and defence contractors!

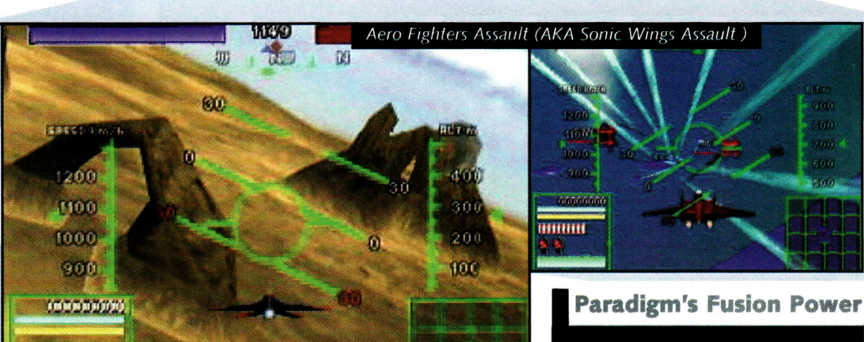
"*Pilotwings* was very much a joint collaboration between the two companies," points out Gary. "It being our first game, we didn't claim to be game experts, we were technology experts. So it made sense working with Nintendo, using their outstanding games knowledge." The relationship proved so harmonious that, in addition to the three games for Video System Japan, Paradigm are already working with Nintendo on another, as yet unnamed, project.

"The first game for Video System will be *Aero Fighters Assault* – it's in the final stages of development right now," confirms Gary. "Whereas *Pilotwings* was whimsical, *Sonic Wings* is more traditional, more of a combat simulator. You'll be flying modern jets, including an F-14, an A-10, an F-SX and an Su-35, as well as two bonus craft."

The enemy planes are similarly diverse, including the Eurofighter, the F-22a, the MiG-34 and the Kafir. Gary again: "All of them have a basis in reality, and then some things we've modified to make sure they're a lot more fun. We've been able to include some very believable manoeuvres which makes for realistic dogfighting. One of the team is a former F-14 pilot, so he should know if something's right!"

The upshot is that *Aero Fighters Assault* will be the most simulation-like N64 title yet, although the actual encounters are fictional. They include defending downtown Tokyo, attacking a stealth battleship in the Pacific, taking out a Flying Fortress bomber near New York, reconnaissance in the Monument Valley, battling another Flying Fortress (in the Andes), then an all-out dogfight over the Antarctic.

There's also one final stage, but, as with the names of the other Paradigm games in progress, Gary isn't giving any hints.



Aero Fighters Assault (AKA Sonic Wings Assault)

Pilotwings 64

Paradigm's Fusion Power

Not only have Paradigm established themselves as a major player in the world of Nintendo gaming, they're now also taking an active role in third-party development with their Fusion 64 package. "It's a program we put together as a service to Nintendo and other developers," explains Paradigm's Gary Bandy. Developers who buy their emulation system from Paradigm can make use of development tools like Ultravision, a real-time rendering engine. "The idea is that a developer can come to us, and when they get the package, it's all pre-loaded and ready to go," says Gary.

Paradigm aren't allowed to say who's using the system, but their general customers include Virgin and Namco, so it's likely that these two are currently writing their potential N64 hits with some of Paradigm's software tools.

GO! GO!







Midway

Published in the UK by GT, Midway – who've already given us *Doom*, *Wayne Gretzky*, *Crusin' USA* and *NBA Hangtime* – started life as Bally Midway.

They were a pinball manufacturer, and first made their mark with video games when they bought the rights to sell the *Pong* coin-op from Atari. Midway now own Williams and (since last year) Atari Games, along with console developer Trade West. All of which means that N64 gamers can look forward to some pretty high profile stuff from them, including *Mortal Kombat 4*, the first 3D beat-'em-up in the series, and *Robotron X* – an update of the classic Williams coin-op. A similar re-working job will also be applied to *Joust*, though how the game most notable for featuring a 'flap' button will get the '90s treatment is anyone's guess.

The *Mortal Kombat* series gets another opportunity to redeem itself (after the deathly dull *Mortal Kombat Trilogy*) with *MK Mythologies: Sub-Zero*, a beat-'em-up-based arcade adventure. The brainchild of *MK* creator John Tobias (partner Ed Boon is concentrating on *MK4*), it's an attempt to flesh out the history of Sub-Zero, with other familiar *MK* characters cropping up as the martial artist traverses the semi-3D platform-based world.

Back in the land of arcade conversions, early signs are that *San Fransisco Rush* will be a big improvement on *Cruis'n USA*, with multiple pathways through the levels, plus visuals comparable with those of the coin-op. And there are yet more beat-'em-ups, with *War Gods*, *Biofreaks* and Atari's *Mace: The Dark Age*. The characters and emphasis on weapons, including swords and battleaxes, should set *Mace* apart from Midway's other fighting games, particularly the *Street-Fighter*-derived *MK* series.

Flushed with the success of handling the *Doom 64* conversion, Midway are also taking on both *Quake* (see below) and *Hexen*, a fantasy-themed first-person title using *Doom* technology. While *Doom* puts all sorts of big guns at the player's disposal, *Hexen's* style is more swords and sorcery, with spells, staffs, and a whole range of magical collectibles. It's even possible to take to the air in some stages.

Unfortunately, the actual level designs will be identical to those on the PC, but fog effects and the machine's filtering abilities will greatly improve graphical quality. Best of all, a *Mario Kart*-style four player mode is included, recreating the joys of the multi-player deathmatches in the original. Given that *Quake* is on the cards and *Hexen 2* uses that game's 3D engine, we wouldn't be at all surprised if Midway wasn't gearing up to an N64 port of that, too.

Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey



Mace – The Dark Age

Hexen 2 (PC)

MK Trilogy

Mace – The Dark Age

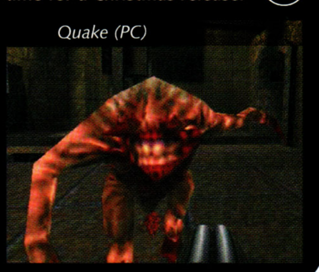
QUAKE – just what's so special?

Top dog amongst Midway's impending selection of N64 games has to be Quake, for those familiar with the PC original at least. This is essentially Doom 64 taken to the next level – in fact it's been coded in-house at Midway by the same team. Gone are the flat sprite monsters, with real 3D characters (each built from 150-200 polygons) lunging at your first-person viewpoint instead. And while the levels in Doom were nicely atmospheric, the medieval-meets-industrial sections in Quake are far more dynamic and solid-feeling.

Some clever pre-calculated light sourcing and the ability to have platforms and rooms above other searchable areas adds immensely to the environment, while the more action-orientated gameplay style, and wealth of sneaky weapons, traps, and underwater passages, makes for a pretty diverse experience. Quake 64 may not be able to match up to Turok in terms of raw firepower or the number of monsters on screen at once, but the locations promise to be far more interactive.

One thing Quake 64 won't have, unfortunately, is the PC's multi-player mode. Because of the complexity of those visuals, the split-screen viewpoint offered by the likes of Hexen just isn't possible. Given that the PC Quake was deemed lacking in single-player mode this is unfortunate. But Midway is still confident that they can crank up the excitement levels sufficiently to make it a definite step up from Doom 64. "It may not be multi-player, but believe me it'll be wonderful," says Andrew Hoolan at Midway.

We'll know how right he is when it's completed in time for a Christmas release.



Quake (PC)

Acclaim

Founded in 1987, and a major player in the world of Nintendo games since the days of the NES, Acclaim have already proven their worth with *Turok Dinosaur Hunter*, the first game from a third party to match up to Nintendo's own creations. Which is probably why the US division is already hard at work on *Turok 2*, and also why (our source tells us) they have the only 64DD development kit outside Nintendo, and are developing the game for the new format.

This could be great news for *Turok* fans, with Acclaim already considering the idea of releasing low-price add-on level packs for the game every few months.

Prior to that, keep an eye out of *NFL Quarterback Club '98*. American football simulations are usually pretty ropey-looking at the best of times, but this one boasts 3D player models so detailed you'd swear they were pre-rendered. This is down to the use of the N64's high resolution 640x480 pixel mode, combined with rendered stadium textures and purpose-designed characters that use motion-capture data taken from New York Jets running back Adrian Murrell.

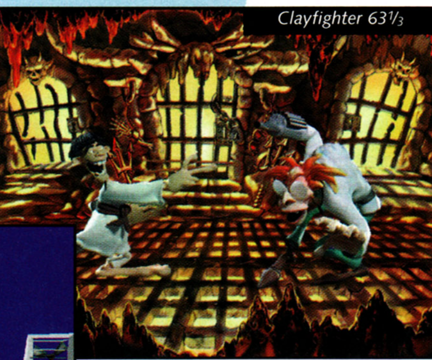
Interplay

Interplay actually began life way back in 1983, though it wasn't until they began co-publishing in 1987 that gamers really began to sit up and take notice. SNES fans still fondly recall the likes of *Rock 'n' Roll Racing*, *Earthworm Jim*, and (possibly) *Clayfighter*.

It's the latter that's to be first for the 64-bit treatment in *Clayfighter Extreme*, with even better claymation bringing even dafter looking fighters to life (Sumo Santo, a disembodied hand or the Statue Of Liberty, anyone?). The 3D power of the machine will also be put to use, with full 3D locations in which to do battle (although the two fighters will always be viewed from the side), and multiple camera views showing it all off to the full. As with previous *Clayfighter* games, the violence is accompanied by slapstick silliness and clay splattering rather than blood 'n' guts. Which should please the family-minded Nintendo.

Ultra Descent was also on the cards, but that idea has now been binned, so the second N64 release from Interplay will now be *Earthworm Jim 3* (due next April), a full 3D outing for the gun-toting invertebrate. The daft humour will remain, but this time all the cartoon creatures will be solid 3D models, and instead of battling the usual bad guys, Jim literally has to confront his own worst nightmares as he battles to repair his brain after a nasty blow to the head.

The game is actually being developed at Dumfermline-based VIS Interactive, so more on this when we interrogate European developers next month.


Clayfighter 63⅓


Earthworm Jim 3

Shiny Entertainment

While Interplay is set to release N64 Earthworm Jim 3 early next year, its original creators Shiny haven't actually committed to the platform yet. However, don't rule out Shiny just yet.

"I love it, I just think that the cart format will drag it down over time," reckons Shiny head Dave Perry. "I can't wait for the 64DD – I believe it'll be $99 including a game. That would be splendid." Perry reckons that's when he'll come off the fence and apply that unique Shiny perspective to the machine. "I have an idea. We're running physics tests at the moment. If we can do it, it'll be a new genre of game..."

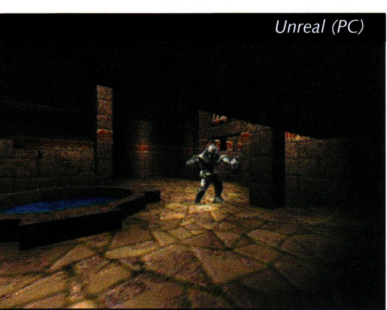


NFL Quarterback Club '98

Epic Megagames

Don't be surprised if the name is unfamiliar – Epic carved a reputation in the world of PC shareware, only recently causing a real buzz with their *Unreal* project.

The PC version has still to see the light of day, but early word is that it could well be a *Quake*-beater, featuring more finely detailed environments, real-time light sourcing, and more complex 3D monster shapes. As for the much-rumoured N64 version, Craig Lafferty at Epic's US offices tells us: "At this point it's still to early to comment on the N64 version of *Unreal*, other than to say it'll be for the 64DD add on. GT will be publishing the game, but who will develop it along with Epic is still unknown."


Unreal (PC)

Virgin

Since Virgin were bought out by Viacom, the high profile publishers have been noticeably less boisterous, not to say less prolific. Which may explain the continued non-appearance of premier N64 game *Freak Boy*.

It's always sounded like a great idea, with a proper 3D game world and a hero able to absorb skill-giving items into three different areas of his body, but changes in the development team have already put development back, and now it's not 100% certain whether it will ever appear. The much-rumoured *Command & Conquer* conversion, meanwhile, appears to have been just that. Virgin tell us that if *C&C* developer Westwood do transfer one of their acclaimed real-time wargames to the N64, then it'll be *Red Alert* (effectively *C&C 2*), rather than the original game. Either way, don't expect any N64 stuff from Virgin until well into next year, if at all.

Ion Storm

Founded just a few months back by a bunch of high-profile developers, including *Doom*-and-*Quake*-creator John Romero, Ion Storm have already made headlines with rumours of $10 million deals and the announcement of three PC titles, at least one of which is set to use the impressive *Quake 3D* engine.

There's been much talk of one or more of the games – including Romero's *Daikatana* and Tom Hall's *Anachronox* – making it to the N64, which Ion Storm's Mike Wilson has now confirmed. "We hope all three of our current titles in progress can be ported to the N64," he tells us. "But our games are so content-heavy, it may come down to a matter of storage space. We won't do the development in-house, but rather use an outside 'port house' familiar with the N64 and the *Quake* technology. We won't ship a port that is a lesser version than the PC product, though. N64 *Doom* is great, and we hear *Quake* is progressing nicely, so you can probably expect *Daikatana 64* in mid '98."

Singletrac

Previously a PlayStation-only developer, Singletrac is the latest US-based third party to sign up with Nintendo.

There's been no announcement yet about what games we can expect, but it's unlikely that Sony hit *Twisted Metal* will make it over. Do, however, expect future titles to retain a similar ultra-explosive, multi-player approach to that used in existing Singletrac creations.






Konami

Konami is primarily a Japanese concern, but has had offices in the US since the late '80s, when Nintendo's NES system first took hold.

Most of their American team are still working on PlayStation titles, but **N64** Magazine does know that at least one game for N64 is in the works. Konami isn't saying what, but it's a fair bet that it'll be a conversion of one of their existing Sony titles. The good money has it that it'll have something to do with American sports, too.

Sierra

While a conversion of impending PC flight sim *Red Baron* was mooted way back when the N64 was first announced, Sierra have now canned all plans to publish the game and indeed anything else on console systems, preferring to focus instead on the PC and Mac.

The acquisition of a smaller, N64-capable developer with whom to create and publish N64 software hasn't been ruled out, however. Watch this space.

Gametek

SNES gamers may remember Gametek for, er, classics like Kawasaki *Caribbean Challange* and *Vanna White's Wheel of Fortune*. But they did also give us the excellent *Spectre*, and besides, a company shake-up a couple of years or so back has apparently done wonders for quality control.

All of which bodes well for their first N64 effort, *Robotech: Crystal Dreams*. Based on the Japanese big robot cartoon of a few years back, it's a first-person 3D shoot-'em-up featuring solid polygonal robots, 3D positional sound and something called a MultiBranching Chronosync Algorithm (MBCSA).

Gametek claims MBCSA makes the game world respond to the player's action in real-time, but it may well just be an excuse for a technical-sounding abbreviation. More interesting to players is the ability to transform the player craft from fighter to guardian to battleoid mode, each with its own strengths, weaknesses and control styles.

Ocean

Although primarily a European company, Ocean's US-based development team are working to complete *Mission: Impossible* in time for a late summer release, just in time to tie in with the theatrical outing of the second Mission movie. Happily, the game will be available simultaneously worldwide, rather than the usual release in Japan, then America, then Europe nonsense – something to do with the development team comprising mostly of Brits abroad, apparently.

And speaking of impossible missions, that's exactly what the Ocean US team will be basing their next game on. "They've already upgraded the engine for the second game and developed gadgets they didn't have a chance to get into the first one," reveals our very own spy at Ocean. (Okay, so it's the PR guy.) The already impressive AI routines, which make it possible for each computer character to react individually to situations, events and even noises, promise to be even cleverer in the second outing. "They've already got lots of good stuff lined up for the game," says our informant. "Now they're just waiting for the movie script for Paramount to determine the direction of the plot."

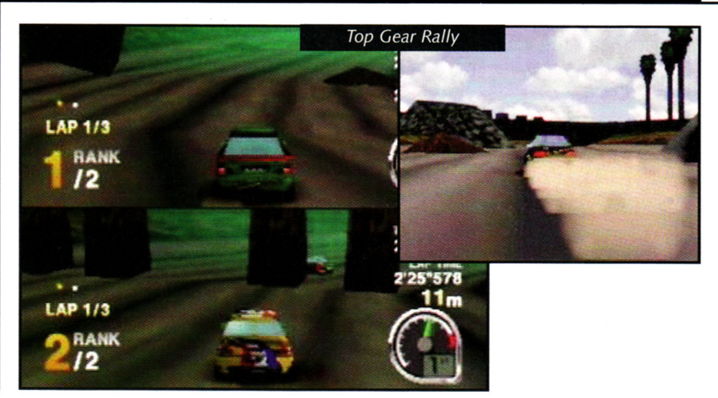


Mission: Impossible

Mission: Impossible

Mission: Impossible

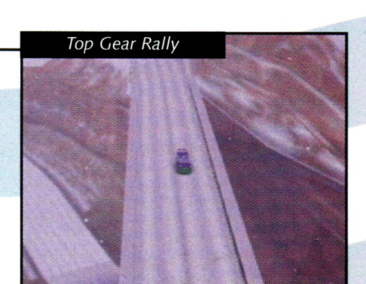
Kemco & Boss Game Studios



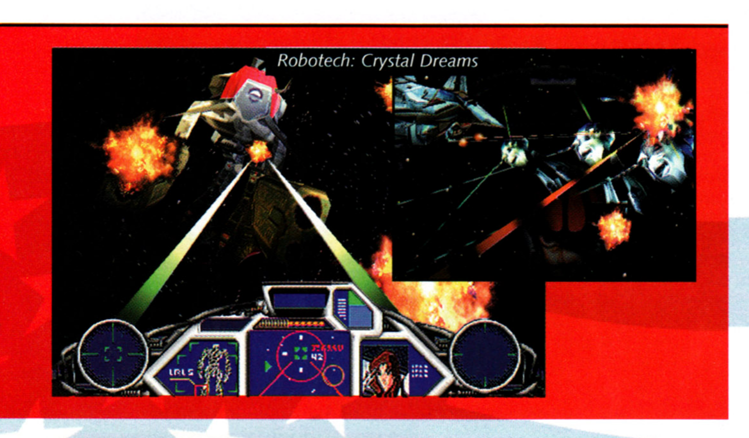
Top Gear Rally

Kemco, a US subsidiary of a Japanese Engineering company, have a surprisingly long history with Nintendo, publishing games like *Shadowgate* and several Disney titles on the NES before creating *Top Gear* for the SNES.

With their N64 licence it's the latter title they're returning to, working with relatively new development team Boss Game Studios (currently with only *Spider* for the Playstation under their belt) on *Top Gear Rally*. A split-screen mode, excellent weather effects, stunning scenery and some amazing nighttime lighting effects are all very good reasons why this is one of the best-fancied driving games coming to the N64.



Top Gear Rally


Robotech: Crystal Dreams

LucasArts

With *Shadows Of The Empire* under LucasArts' belt, N64 gamers might expect them to be gearing up for more titles, Star Wars-related or not.

Sadly, there's no word on any more Nintendo work from George Lucas's gaming division, but given that the next Star Wars movie is currently filming it's highly likely that a tie-in of some sort is being planned. And we wouldn't be too surprised if LucasArts dusted off some of their other well-loved licences, like Indiana Jones, for the N64 treatment.

We'll keep you posted.

"Blast the door kid!"

Shadows Of The Empire is the only N64 title so far to emerge from one of the best-loved third party developers. Its lead programmer, Eric Johnston, explains: "For the first phase of development, the target machine didn't exist. And not only were we developing the game for a new machine, but for a completely new kind of machine."

"At the time we started," adds LucasArts' Mark Haigh-Hutchinson, "only the biggest (and loudest) SGI computer in our building could actually play the game. That's what we wanted, though – to build a game that couldn't be done through conventional programming."

"The biggest challenge", continues Mark, "besides fitting the game onto the cartridge, was to know when to reign ourselves in during the design process. Before we knew it, there were five different kinds of gameplay in Shadows. At first they seemed like minor differences (the difference between flying a Snowspeeder and the Outrider), but each unique level created its own challenges. The hover train level was probably the most difficult to actually pull off. We learned that, as much fun as a multi-style game can be to play, it certainly is a bear to make!"

As for future N64 work, both remain tight-lipped. "Of course, you can be sure we've got some more tricks up our sleeve," hints Mark, while Eric says, "Anything that depends on the success of Shadows of the Empire would seem to be in good shape, as it's doing very well…"

Electronic Arts

Formed in 1982 by ex-Apple man Trip Hawkins (then just 28), Electronic Arts attempted to emulate the style of Hollywood, both in their choice of name (a throwback to United Artists) and in their studio development system. Hawkins' casual attitude, team spirit and good business sense ensured that the company quickly blossomed, employing around 300 people in three different studios.

But because EA had made their fortune in the world of PC software, they didn't take Nintendo seriously, and so didn't take the plunge until 1990. The initial cartridge outlay represented a big risk, but EA's small army of sports titles ensured that it soon became one of the biggest NES, and then SNES, developers around.

Up until very recently, EA had shunned the N64, however, citing the cartridge format and the costs involved as the primary reason for avoiding the format. But that decision has now been reversed, with *FIFA 64* already available and more conversions of EA Sports staples on the way.

EA are tight lipped about what we can expect in the future, but it would be fair to assume that *John Madden Football, NBA Live, NHL Hockey* and *PGA Golf* will all make it to the N64 at some point. Electronic Arts also handle Dreamworks titles, so it's conceivable that the game-of-the-movie *The Lost World* (Jurassic Park 2) may also be converted.

Angel Studios

Like Paradigm, Angel have absolutely no experience in the field of Nintendo gaming, but possess a hugely impressive graphics-based pedigree. But where Paradigm's expertise lies in the world of simulations, Angel Studio are best known for producing stunning rendered imagery.

Founded in '84, Angel first came to prominence some five years later when they provided the virtual reality sequences for the very silly movie The Lawnmower Man. A state-of-the-art music video (and accompanying hydraulic ride) for Peter Gabriel's 'Kiss That Frog' single followed, and then tentative forays into gaming with experimental coin-ops *Orbit Defenders, Dr Megow's Mad Cap Ornithon* and *F-1 NetRace*.

Buggie Boogie is Angel's first N64 title, and after much input from Nintendo's Shigeru Miyamoto, has been radically transformed over the past twelve months from a family-orientated exploration game into a more realistic and action-packed vehicle-based idea. A two-player battle mode will be included, along with an unusual time-attack format which requires players to pick-up items that drastically change the abilities of their vehicle. Much time has apparently been spent ensuring that the behaviour and look of the vehicles alters correctly when items are collected.

It sounds intriguing, and with that magic touch from Miyamoto it may well establish Angel Studios as a force to be reckoned with.


Diablo

Blizzard

Here's another well-regarded PC developer that hasn't taken the plunge into the world of Nintendo as such, but is of interest to N64 gamers. The story concerns Nintendo's plan to develop their own version of Diablo, Blizzard's excellent action-based role-playing game.

It's unlikely that the multi-player option will be included, but there should be plenty of opportunity for the machine's graphics to add that extra class to the moody isometric 3D dungeon locations and pre-rendered monster sprites.

Player 1

This recently formed developer has thus far worked on just one game: *Robotron X* for GT. And it's this update of the Williams coin-op classic that they're currently porting to the N64.

The game itself will remain identical to that of the PlayStation version, with 200 levels of running and shooting around a flat but 3D playing area. Visually, the game will boast better camera tracking than the PlayStation version, as well as generally improved visuals.

"All the textures and polygons are way better-looking than our previous version," reckon Player 1. "Essentially, all the N64's graphics effects will be used." And that can't be a bad thing in our opinion.





GO! GO!



H20

Having been snatched from under Atari's nose by Nintendo, H20 have been working on their 'anti-*Tetris*' game, *Phear*, solidly for the last two years.

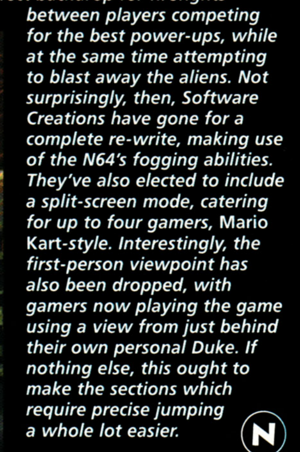
Renamed *Tetrisphere* for the N64, the game now boasts cleaner visuals and a two-player mode, although the basic idea – sort of *Tetris Attack* in 3D – remains the same. Sources at H20 say the much-delayed puzzler (the first such game for the N64) is in the final testing stages, with all the special effects, and features like chain reactions and explosions, in place. Expect a release, via Nintendo, some time this summer.

DUKE NUKEM – stripped down

PC developer 3D Realms have yet to commit themselves to working on the N64, but they've given Brit-based Software Creations the green light to convert their flagship game, Duke Nukem 3D, to the system for publishers GTi. Which means N64 gamers will have even more Doom-style titles to choose from, this latest boasting a less than serious approach to the usual alien invasion story, and the sort of game content which may well give Nintendo a few headaches.

Duke Nukem 64 takes the battle onto the city streets, you see, where the designers have deemed porn shops, strip shows and even seedy cinemas a must. At least, that's in the PC version. Whether Nintendo will allow such things to appear in the N64 conversion is still up in the air. George Broussard of 3D Realms has said: "Essentially, we want to keep the strippers in the game. But I don't know. If it comes down to an issue of censorship, and Nintendo says, 'Well, if you decide to keep the strippers in the game then we can't release it,' we'll have to make a decision there."

The original was easily most fun in multi-player mode, where the inventive cityscapes provided the perfect backdrop for firefights between players competing for the best power-ups, while at the same time attempting to blast away the aliens. Not surprisingly, then, Software Creations have gone for a complete re-write, making use of the N64's fogging abilities. They've also elected to include a split-screen mode, catering for up to four gamers, Mario Kart-style. Interestingly, the first-person viewpoint has also been dropped, with gamers now playing the game using a view from just behind their own personal Duke. If nothing else, this ought to make the sections which require precise jumping a whole lot easier.

Duke Nukem 3D (PC)

3DO

The company behind a rival system may seem an odd N64 licensee, but Nintendo has already given the go-ahead for an update of 3DO title *Battlesport* for the N64, due some time next year.

A futuresport game reminiscent of LucasArts *Ballblazer*, the original *Battlesport* pitted two-on-two teams of be-weaponed hovercraft against each other, attempting to gain control of a glowing ball and blast it into an arena goal. Developer Cyclone Studios has yet to make a start on *Battlesport 64*, but improved detail on objects, more complex arenas, and the opportunity to damage the scenery have all been mooted. "*Battlesport* is born to be on a system like N64," Cyclone's Helmut Kobler told one journalist. "There is a possibility of the game going four-player, if two systems could be linked up. As far as I know, a link is possible, but I can't speak for Nintendo."

Vic Tokai

It's actually the American division of Vic Tokai that's working on *Dark Rift*, not the Japanese as featured in last month's round-up.

Nothing else from the US office has been announced as yet, but hopes are high that the developer can make its mark with this 3D polygonal beat-'em-up. (It has to better than *War Gods*.)



Dark Rift

Dark Rift

NEXT MONTH

N64 comes home to see how developers like Core, Probe and Software Creations are keeping the European end up.



Coming next month in...



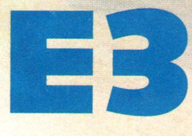
MULTI RACING CHAMPIONSHIP



The N64's first real driving game! It's not out in the UK till September, but next month **N64** Magazine will bring you the world's first review of Ocean's great-looking racer!







Held in Atlanta this June, E3 is America's premier video games show. We'll be there, and next month we'll bring you a full report, including *Banjo and Kazooie*, *Ultra Donkey Kong*, a chat with Shigeru Miyamoto, any 64DD news and all the new games that're announced.

PLUS!
BLAST CORPS

It's different, destructive and utterly desirable. And it's out in the UK in a matter of weeks. Look out for a monstrous review in the next issue of **N64**, bursting with tips and vital secret information.



GO GO!! TROUBLEMAKERS

After delays and hiccups, Treasure's brilliant-looking *Go Go!!* will arrive in time for an import review next month!

HOW TO...

...defeat your friends at Mario Kart 64
Jonathan, who, to our immense frustration, always wins at *Mario Kart 64*, will be revealing his secrets. We'll be reading as closely as you.

...reach for the skies in Pilotwings 64
Pilotwings hasn't been exhaustively explored yet in **N64** Magazine. That'll be rectified next month.

...play mah jong
We managed to disuade Wil this month, but next month he insists.

AND! We'll have import reviews of *Hexen*, *Dark Rift*, the US version of *Star Fox 64* and the (supposedly improved) Japanese *Shadows of the Empire*.



Issue 5 on sale Friday, 25th July (Fingers crossed.)

index to N64 Magazine issue 4

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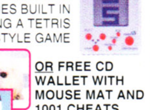
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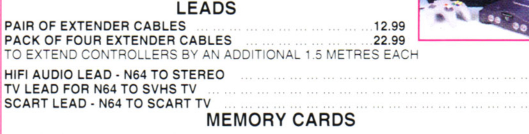
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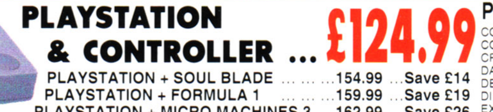
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